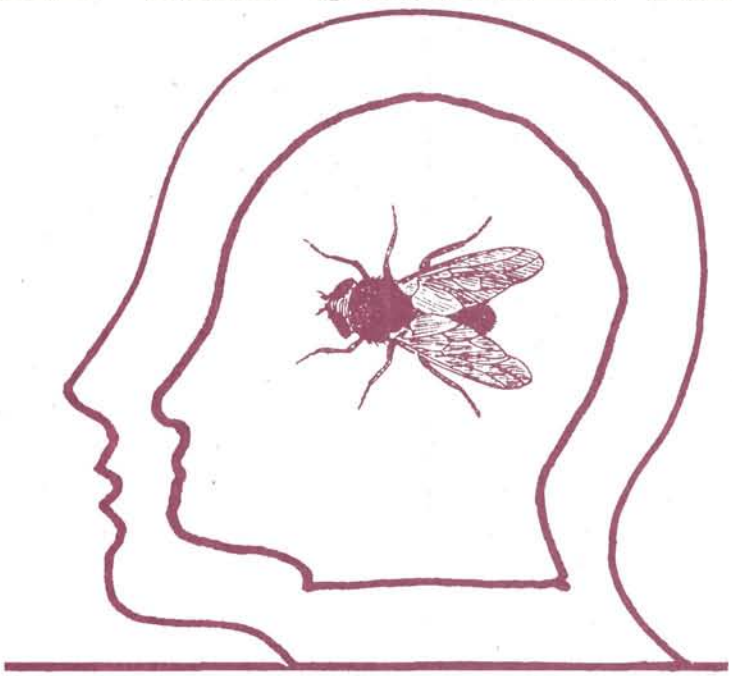
Vol. CV No. 10 May 12, 1978 75 cents

commonweal

JOHN N. KOTRE

RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY AND THE STERILE SELF



ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

RALPH C. CHANDLER

HAROLD F. BREIMYER THE FARMERS' STRIKE
ABIGAIL McCARTHY ALL Y
FRANK GETLEIN HOW TO
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR

JANET GROTH THE WORLD
ALSO: W.S. DiPIERO, JOHN DRUSKA, JOHN SHEA, JACK RIEMER and STEVE LAWSON

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NEWS & VIEWS

More from Mexico

The presiding council of the Mexican Bishops' Conference has formally reproved Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo of Cuernavaca for pro-Marxist statements [News & Views, 4/28/78].

The statement carried the signatures of Cardinal Jose Salazar of Guadalajara, the Archbishop of Mexico City, Ernesto Corripio, and four other prominent prelates.

Mendez Arceo ostensibly proposed in a Sunday homily that Marxism may provide a method of analysis offering a useful interpretation of the situation of exploited people.

The council responded that "the Gospel of our Lord is not linked to any socio-economic ideology or system."

This brought a stinging rejoinder in *Proceso* from the Jesuit writer Enrique Maza. "That is false," he wrote. "The Gospel is not preached on the moon. And here on earth there is no other way to express it than in human ideological terms."

Mendez Arceo, meanwhile, alleged that he was misquoted, and he sent a rectification to *Excelsior*, the source of the story. It would not print a correction.

Excelsior quoted Mendez Arceo as follows: "The realization of the Kingdom of God in the modern world cannot be achieved without Marxist thought."

The correct version, according to Mendez Arceo, appeared in *Correo del Sur* of Cuernavaca. Speaking of Porfirio Mirada's *Marx and the Bible*, he said:

"This book on Marx will unblock many mindsets of Marxists and of Christians. Porfirio Miranda immersed himself in the 43 volumes in German of the complete works of Marx in search of the realization of the kingdom of God in the world, since it is evident that the transformation of the modern world cannot be achieved without Marxist discourse. This does not mean the creation of false infallibilities, but the condemnation of unchristian condemnations."

Mendez Arceo says the telescoped version of *Excelsior* does not represent his thought. Furthermore, it would seem he never said those words.

The circumstances place Mendez Arceo is position of having been censured by the presiding council of the Mexican Bishops' Conference on the basis of a newspaper story, and without the courtesy of a formal hearing.

State of the Clergy

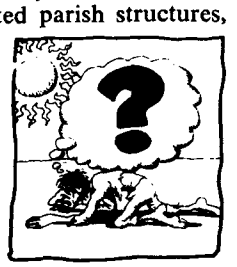
An alarming assessment of the priesthood in France has been published by Henri Fesquet in *Le Monde*.

"Never before has the priest's job been held in such low esteem," he wrote. "Once revered and privileged, it is currently relegated to a limbo not so much of disdain as of indifference."

Further, "the priest is now suspected of being a useless and archaic leftover."

This is an analysis not easily discounted, much less dismissed. Fesquet is perhaps France's most astute and respected religious commentator. At Vatican II, his press-conference questions were sometimes as important as the answers they elicited, and of course he wrote one of the very best histories of the Council, *The Drama of Vatican II* (Random House). He's no cynical crank.

Fesquet says that in some respects the Church in France is reaping what it has s o w e d—because of "sketchy training, superannuated parish structures, and a naive view of the faith."



Accordingly, "today few French citizens enter a church unless for a christening, a marriage or a funeral."

Other observations by Fesquet:

"Priestly celibacy, under the influence of science and the breaking down of sexual barriers, has lost so much of its aura that very few young men ever think of entering the seminary or accepting the conditions of parish life.

"Those who do are looked on as either heroic or unwitting.

"Missionary orders attract fewer and fewer young candidates who persist to ordination; when they do, they look for the kinds of responsibility which will more or less assimilate them into the life of a layman."

The French hierarchy is not blind to conditions, Fesquet remarks, and in fact is beginning to fight back. "It's a question of survival," Fesquet comments.

Thus the special emphasis placed on World Vocation Day last April 16.

Thus, too, the agenda for the upcoming plenary meeting of the French hierarchy at Lourdes. A committee of bishops and priests has been named to sum up the situation and draw up plans for the future. Each bishop has likewise been invited to devise a plan of action for his own diocese.

Is Fesquet hopeful? He gives no direct evidence of being so.

Then, again, how can he be given a crucial statistic of his report: two-thirds of all French priests are over age 50! The age pyramid of the French clergy is upside down.

* * *

France's clerical age and numbers problem is not unique, as conditions in the U.S. continue to demonstrate.

The Claretian Fathers, Western Province, recently notified the Archbishop of San Antonio that as of June they will relinquish the staffing of San Fernando Cathedral, a responsibility they have fulfilled since 1902.

The Claretians "are facing a shortage of personnel, older men, sickness, etc." said Archbishop Furey. They'll also leave the cathedral's mission of St. Francis de Paola.

Odds and Ends

—In the April 3 *Christianity and Crisis*, Saint Hereticus reveals the astonishing news there may be no distinct "Harvey Cox" after all, but rather a Martin Marty turning out books under Cox's name, thus relieving himself of the charge by professional colleagues that he's writing too much.

Saint Hereticus came onto this discovery through a *New York Times* revelation that Marty was the author, most recently, of *Turning East*. (The vulgar *Washington Post* tends to make front-page headlines out of its discoveries, remarked Saint Hereticus. The *Times* "buries its scandalous discoveries discreetly within the cavernous bowels of its Sunday edition.")

There follows a nifty bit of literary detective work by Saint Hereticus—on a par with that of a dozen or so years ago when the shade of Saint Hereticus proved that Xavier Rynne was really the pen name of a certain woman poet at *The New Yorker* magazine. (A British Catholic journal seized on that literary deviltry as the hardest of hard news.)

Now just one challenge awaits our favorite detective (next to the other Rev. Detective Brown; Chesterton's): Who's Saint Hereticus? Is he who he thinks he is? Or is he really Martin Marty filling in that daily 30-minute lacuna in his life as professordeanauthoreditorlecturercolumnisttrendspotterhusbandfatherandLutheran?

He's got to be. We'll be watching for confirmation.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Mutual Destruction?

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Re your editorial statement of 20 January ". . . the threat of the deployment of destabilizing strategic systems, such as the M-X, a first strike counterforce weapon, which some feel could jolt the Soviets into a first strike posture of their own."

What do you think the Soviet SS-17, SS-18 and SS-19 missiles are, if not "first strike counterforce weapons"? For the last twenty years Soviet military writings have demanded a capability to "pre-empt" enemy attack destroying his forces on his own territory. This is an understandable strategy in light of Soviet history, but it hardly promotes mutually acceptable arms control.

We need not imitate Soviet postures, but it would imprudent to do nothing about this potential threat to our strategic forces. Deploying the M-X in limited numbers (75-150) would not give us a first strike capability against Soviet ICBMs, but would allow us to destroy a considerable proportion of Soviet missiles "left over" after their first strike. Not only would the mobile M-X reduce Soviet temptation to preempt in a crisis, but, being less vulnerable than current ICBMs, it would prevent the United States from adopting the "launch on warning" strategy which could easily lead to accidental war.

As to the Mobilization for Survival, I doubt not their sincerity, but have they considered that it may only be the threat of mutual destruction that has led to the paltry efforts at reducing tension, that without nuclear weapons the powerful ideological hostilities of the U.S. and the Soviet Union might boil over into a destructive conventional war?

Finally, it is wrong, of course, to accuse the advocates of disarmament with being more interested in serving Soviet foreign policy than in advancing

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COMMONWEAL
232 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016
Telephone: (212) MU 3-2042

A review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Printed in the USA and published bi-weekly by Commonweal Publishing Co. *Copyright © 1978 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.**—US and Canada: $18 a year. Foreign $20. Single copy 75c. Special two-year rate $32. Foreign $36.*

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, and Book Review Digest. Microfilms from Vol. 1, 1924; to date available through University Microfilms; 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. Serials Data Program No.: ISSN 0010-3330.

1968: TEN YEARS AFTER

If recent American history has a symbolic year in which all the major currents of cultural, political and religious history came together, it is 1968. It was, on one level, the year of *2001, Yellow Submarine* and *Hair*. On another, of assassinations, *Armies of the Night, Cancer Ward*, Catonsville, upheaval in the church, and the Apollo VIII vision of the other side of the moon. It is still not clear what 1968 meant; but nevertheless, 1978 is a time of tenth anniversaries—to many a time to remember wounds, to ask to what degree they have healed and what, if anything, we have learned.

Ten years ago, North Korea seized the *Pueblo*. Today we are worried more about the crass and subtle influence of South Korean cash in our political life than about what the North Koreans have done to our military honor.

Ten years ago the Viet Cong launched the Tet offensive in a way that suddenly and dramatically convinced the American press, congressional leadership and a vast segment of the American public that the Vietnam war was not what they thought it was. It was the week when we all saw the film clips and front page photos of the South Vietnamese policeman blowing the brains out of the head of the Viet Cong suspect in the middle of the street—the picture that finally prodded the too-long-silent Robert F. Kennedy to stand up on the Senate floor and ask what had happened to America. Today some historians and journalists debate over whether at Tet our side "really" won or lost—applying, alas, some of the same guidelines, like casualty figures, that had us consistently "winning" that terrible lost war. Today we can also understand Tet as the psychological turning point that enabled us as a nation to do the right thing—re-examine our commitment—for the imperfect reason—not because of the unjustified evil we were doing in Vietnam but because we "winners" were starting to "lose."

Meanwhile, ten years ago, Eugene McCarthy reminded the American

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electorate that it was still possible to run for president on a moral issue.

Ten years ago students everywhere began demanding the unqualified "right" to do "their own thing" with their sex lives. At Columbia University a relative handful of students led by the SDS occupied a couple of buildings to protest the university's complicity with the war and its putting up a gym that would encroach on its Harlem neighborhood. The protest ended when the police broke heads. At San Francisco State the president got tough and ended his strike by breaking heads as well. Today the Columbia gym has been built as planned and the tough San Francisco State president, the eccentric S. I. Hayakawa, sits in the United States Senate. And the latest trend in university education is renewed interest in teaching moral values.

Ten years ago Martin Luther King announced his plans to march on Washintgon with thousands of poor people who would set up tents on the capitol grounds and demand their share of the nation's wealth. Therefore he was killed and, in angry answer, the ghettos of the nation went up in flame. Today the black poor for whom King died are still poor; but ironically his spirit seems to have so freed his native South from racism that the Southern white governor who hung his portrait in the Georgia State House could become President.

Ten years ago next September *Newsweek*'s cover featured Hubert H. Humphrey's face, superimposed against a tense, harsh photo of helmeted troops brandishing rifles in front of the Chicago Hilton—winner of a bloody victory which, in the minds of many, left him morally destroyed. Last week's *Newsweek*'s cover story featured the other Humphrey—wasted and smiling, surrounded by children, public to the last, teaching the nation how a brave man dies.

Ten years ago this summer Pope Paul VI, true to his own understanding of the need to uphold papal authority, and against the advice of his own commission, published *Humanae Vitae*. Ironically, he undermined papal authority in his attempt to save it. Today, most Catholics have forgotten the encyclical and accepted contraception, and they are less likely to listen to what the church says on any issue. Today Pope Paul approaches the end of his life; but he musters his energies to be, as well as he can, another Christ. Two weeks ago, giving up the papal "we" which emphasizes his remoteness and his authority, he wrote to the kidnappers of Aldo Moro: " . . . restore the Honorable Aldo Moro to freedom, . . . I love him as a member of the great human family . . . I beg you on my knees. . . . " Thus some good men will be remembered for their political vision, some for the nobility of their final sentiments. Perhaps that is one way to help the wounds of '68 to close.

WASHINGTON REPORT

HOW TO WHIP INFLATION NOW

The President has rallied us, as did his predecessor, to whip inflation now, although happily Carter has not scattered broadcast the crates of old WIN buttons that must be somewhere in the cellars of the White House. While the general European and Japanese reaction was So what, which promptly expressed itself in the price of the dollar declining, the Wall St. reaction apparently was positive, the hitherto indifferent traders climbing on one another's bandwagons to whoosh up prices considerably in two fast days of record trading. With Wall St., of course, you never can tell. The smarties may just have seized upon the anti-inflation sermon as a pretext to start it all up, shove it to a good high and get out fast with the dumbies' money in their pockets before the collapse. At any rate, the war on inflation is proclaimed again and by universal agreement the President did the right thing in deciding to start by trimming the expenditures of government itself. The next cost-of-living raise that is supposed to be automatic for federal workers would be trimmed one half of one per cent, from an expected six to five-and-a-half.

Well, I agree with the President that it's a good idea to start with the federal government, since that's the only thing he has any kind of direct control over. But I'm not at all sure that shaving off a tad of the catch-up money of janitors and file clerks is the best way into that start. On the question of pay, why not demand much from those to whom much has been given? Give what is needed to those whose need is demonstrably acute? The bottom third, arguably the bottom half of government workers are not on easy street by any means. With U.S. Steel and General Motors, more immediately perceptibly your neighborhood landlord and supermarket, pouring it on at a good clip, do we really get a hand on inflation by driving the bottom more bottomward?

As it happens, there is one great funnel of government expenditure that can readily be crimped in a little, conceivably down to half its flow, in theory even more. This is, of course, what we euphemistically call Defense, but what actually is payments for war past, present, future and vaguely imaginable, with that last category the really big spender.

It is high time we looked at War Spending from the point of view of good old-fashioned Capitalism, which, we are regularly assured, is what we have to defend against the onslaughts of Communism, Socialism, a National Health Program and anything else to make life

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more easeful for people who are not on expense accounts. In simplified form, the theory of capitalism is that capital in the form of raw materials, a workplace, tools or machinery and a distribution system, is operated upon by labor in such wise and to such effect that the product of this union is worth more than both the original capital and the labor expended added up together. That surplus is called profit and if prudently used to finance further enterprise and not frittered away on chorus girls and Dom Perignon, said profit can grow and grow and grow leading to a world of happy workers, even happier proprietors and managers, a plentiful supply of all things necessary for a rich, full life for all and even many things that are not necessary, such as television and plastic hamburgers.

Socialism, on the other hand, according to capitalist theory, presents quite a different prospect. Under socialism, decisions about production and capital expenditure and wages are not made from a market, or reality, base, but from the base of someone's idea about what is good for the community. This is why, according to capitalist theory, Russian and East German towns are so drab, the clothing so stark, the food so forgettable. (It is true there are revisionists who claim the towns, clothing and food in East Germany and Russia were always unfortunate, regardless of how the dominant social-economic theory was described, but they may be put aside for the moment.) The crux of the capitalist argument here is that production and distribution for human need rather than for capitalist profit simply does not provide for that economic growth which, managed by invisible hands, really does lead to the general welfare consciously but impossibly aimed at by socialism.

With those two contending theories of economic life firmly in mind, we turn to War Spending in the United States. What do we find? More in sorrow than anger, it must be recorded that what we find is closer to socialism as described by capitalism than it is to capitalism as described by itself. The first thing we note is the all but total absence of any kind of market at all. Government apparatchiks hand out money to past and future government apparatchiks momentarily in "private" industry, unavoidably influenced by the knowledge that in a few short years the roles of buyers and sellers will be reversed, the "privates" become public, the "publics" gone private. There is no bidding for contracts, there is merely the handout. In form it is a kind of socialism for managers, certainly not a socialism for the general welfare, still less capitalism for free enterprise.

When you examine the capital-labor input-output, as we say in fashionable circles, things are even worse. Far from the marriage of capital and labor producing something worth more than the sum of their original investment, that marriage produces nothing at all in marketplace terms. It is true the War Bureaucracy has made some attempt to get added value through the sale of arms to anyone who can be cajoled into buying them, especially to military dictators who want them to bolster their security feelings, but the basic economics of arms is the same as that of the pyramids: an enormous amount of capital and labor going into a product which can be seen, all right, but which cannot be marketed, cannot remotely be recycled through the system to produce greater returns. It's zilchville.

Now this is O.K. for socialism or pharoahism, granted that the proper authorities agree that arms or pyramids are what will do the people the most good. In such systems, the proper authorities could put it all into scarab amulets or annotated editions of Marx-Leninism and there wouldn't be any check because starving to death could be argued as what the gods or dialectical materialism really calls for at any given moment. In capitalism, however, there is a check and it has been knocking for our attention for some years now. In the form now getting attention, that check is called Inflation, but it has also appeared as Unemployment. What both of them mean is that you can't just keep on pouring capital and labor into a bottomless pit of some kind, arms or pyramids, with no return. Arms made economic sense for the Greeks, the Romans, the Spanish, the French, the Germans and the English; they make sense today for the Russians for the same reasons: if properly and ruthlessly deployed, they can bring a very large return indeed, as can the small arms of the highwayman or mugger. Arms made economic sense to us when we were stealing the country from the Indians: the returns were like winning the daily double every day. Arms make no economic sense at all if you don't plan to use them to steal other people's capital-labor. If you plan to use them to destroy other people's economic product and to accept, in return, the destruction of your own, arms are economic insanity for everyone except the arms merchants in or out of uniform and for them sensible only on the shortest of short-term bases.

Granted all this and I must say it seems to me self-evident, the first, largest and most important government step toward whipping inflation now, as Gerald Ford used to say, must be to whip arms spending into line. President Carter has, in fact, promised to "hold the line" on military spending, but there are no details on what the line is that will be held. If the line is what it has been, that line is what has contributed enormously to inflation as we know it. Ford, while good at passing out WIN buttons, was impossible at doing anything about arms spending because his best and brightest Nixonian holdover was Kissinger, who was crazy about bombs of all kinds.

Carter has no Kissinger and thus may be able to grasp that, from a purely capitalist point of view, it's time to bomb out.

FRANK GETLEIN

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ALL YE HOLY WIDOWS . . .

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

If we are to judge by first-century literature, widows were many and highly valued members in the early church. In the days when we used to chant the litany of the saints at Forty Hours' Devotion (and that is material for a whole other column!) I used to be struck by the petition addressed to "all ye holy widows," but it has only occurred to me lately to wonder—why no petition to "all ye holy widowers"? Weren't there any?

It has only been in the last century that women began to outlive men so the simple explanation that there were more women than men does not answer the question. Perhaps all the holy men survivors entered some form of orders? I think the more likely explanation is in Ellen Goodman's pithily stated axiom: "Women mourn and men remarry." St. Paul's guarded suggestion to the Corinthians that they not remarry unless it was absolutely necessary seems to bear this out. Whatever the reason, widows were cherished in the early church community, and early Christians were often adjured to remember to share their substance with poor widows, to heed the counsel of wise widows, and so on.

Widows have not fared so well in our contemporary world, nor have older women alone in the world for any reason. The poorest of the poor are old women, many of them subsisting on cat food and garbage. The majority on welfare are the widowed, deserted or divorced with children to care for. The emphasis on family movements have made them almost non-persons in the church community, and their problems have not seemed very interesting to trendy seekers after justice.

It has remained for two women who were themselves facing the problems of the woman suddenly alone to start working out some practical solutions. They are Tish Sommers and Laurie Shields of California who made a giant step forward when they found a description to unite widows and other lone women. They founded the Alliance for *Displaced Homemakers.* (italics mine)

Displaced homemakers, they tell us, are people who have been providing service to a family for a substantial number of years—in other words, parents or spouses. "More often women than men, they are 'displaced' from their family role through widowhood, divorce or other loss of family income." As older women they face special problems when they are "forced to go it alone economically."

Displaced homemakers are not only invisible in the churches but they have seemed to be also invisible as citizens. They fall between the cracks of federal income security programs and state programs as well. A displaced homemaker is usually ineligible for Social Security benefits because she is still too young at the time she is left alone. If her children are over eighteen, and if she is not physically disabled, she cannot count on aid as the mother of dependent children although she may be desperately trying to keep a home center together. She cannot get unemployment insurance because her work in the home has been unpaid labor. On the other hand she is at a disadvantage in seeking a job because she has no record of paid employment.

"None of the existing federal programs are geared to meet the specific needs of the displaced homemaker. The older former homemaker is often unaware of even the limited resources within her community.

"A greater problem is that when she has to turn to the job market at her age in life, she feels 'over the hill' and worthless. Having accepted the dependency role for so many years, it is difficult for her to shift to the idea of being capable of self-sufficiency. She needs to gain self-confidence, *with her peers,* before she can be prepared for paid employment. She needs to be shown that her years as homemaker have produced skills which can be transferred to a paying job."

The first goal of the Alliance was achieved when a center and pilot project for just such training was funded by the California legislature. Then in 1976 the state of Maryland passed legislation designating funds for a center. This center offers counseling, workshops, job-training services and employment assistance. Women can go there and, in a warm, friendly, encouraging atmosphere, get information on job reentry, find discussion groups and skills assessment, referrals to responsive community resources and other support services.

Workshops help program participants find out about the rules and peculiarities of their new world. They learn about the legal problems of separation and divorce, wills, social security, public assistance and property settlement. There are also programs on health and nutrition, being a parent in their new circumstances, etc. . . . all offered on a regular basis.

The many who need additional training before they can hope to become employable can be aided with financial assistance and training for traditional and innovative jobs. The assistance is often in form of minimal pay for work. "Even with that tiny pay—for many the first they

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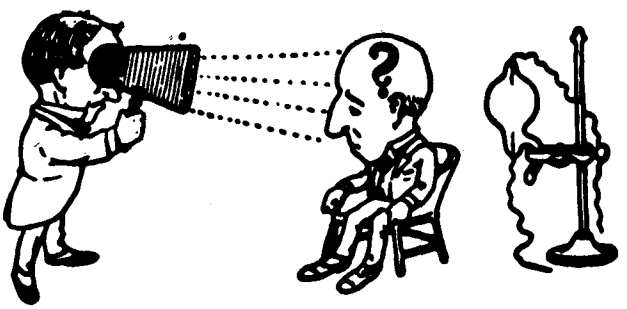
RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY AND THE STERILE SELF

JOHN N. KOTRE



Current psychotherapies dampen the instinct to beget

For all its faults, the encylical *Humanae Vitae* expressed a truth with which we are losing touch: procreation is essential to sex. To render sex infertile, to deny Eros a future, is to render sex trivial and, ultimately, to enervate it. *Humanae Vitae* faltered, however, as do those who hope to excise procreation from sex, by defining procreation in its narrowest sense, as the physical begetting of offspring. It seems incredible that a church concerned with the spiritual life of its members would fail to appreciate the phenomenon of spiritual procreation and so lose sight of religion's capacity to nourish that very phenomenon.

Several years ago I began to involve myself in the study of human fertility. By fertility I do not mean principally the bearing and nurturing of children—the passing on of physical life. Rather, my focus is on spiritual generation, that is, on certain qualities psychoanalyst Erik Erikson has labeled "generosity" and on others we ordinarily think of as creativity. Generativity refers to "a concern for establishing and guiding the next generation," a desire to pass on to children, students, or successors the skills, customs and interpretations of life that define one's people. Creativity, on the other hand, refers to the ability to produce novel yet appropriate solutions to problems, to discover and express original yet insightful perspectives. In practice, the two concepts are not that distinct: though creative products appear to emerge *ex nihilo,* they contain far more of the work of previous generations than even their creators may realize.

In my work I have often been forced to confront contemporary feelings toward human fertility. I have noted the neglect and even disparagement of it by several influential strands of current psychology, and I have reflected on the ways it may be sustained by resources within the Judaeo-Christian and American Catholic traditions.

I.

Popular psychology has a curious hold on many affluent Americans. In its books and workshops and therapies it does more than enlighten or help with personal problems; it defines existence, as religion once did. The kind of psychology developed for and by the mobile, educated segment of our population is a reflection of the strains, ambiguities and aspirations it feels. To comment on this psychology, then, is to comment on the socio-economic niche in which it resides—a niche, by the way, into which increasing numbers of American Catholics are moving.

Historian Christopher Lasch writes that the dominant mood of the 1970s is therapeutic, not religious. "People today hunger not for personal salvation, let alone for the restoration of an earlier golden age, but for the feeling—even if it is only a momentary illusion—of personal well-being, health, and psychic security." It is not the existence of therapy that alarms me, for competent therapy is a blessing, but the conception many therapists have of a "fully-functioning" or "self-actualizing" human being. As a member of a psychology

JOHN N. KOTRE *is associate professor of psychology at the University of Michigan, Dearborn and the author of a forthcoming biography of Andrew M. Greeley (Nelson-Hall).* *This article is from* Toward Vatican III: The Work That Needs To Be Done: *David Tracy, Hans Kung, Johann B. Metz, Editors. Copyright (c) 1978 by The Seabury Press, Inc. Used by permission of the publisher.*

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From one-to-one contact with an 'elder' interested in a patient's past, therapy has moved to groups of peers who refuse to consider anything but the present.

faculty, I see the influence of their thinking daily. (Because of the location of the university where I teach, I see its influence specifically on the children and grandchildren of immigrant Catholics.) In no case of which I am aware do popular models of psychic health have any interest in progeny. For these models the "healthy" individual cultivates, or at least acquiesces in, spiritual sterility.

Current psychotherapies—and the seminars and training sessions into which their view of life spills—dampen the instinct to beget in at least three ways. First, they encourage "open," transient relationships in place of bounded, durable ones. Second, they view the past as a prison and seek, with great success, to liberate individuals from it. Third, they set as an ideal a limitless, fluid self with ever expanding consciousness. All three characteristics dovetail in an interpretation of life that rules out concern for posterity. Lasch writes, "To encourage the subject to subordinate his needs and interests to those of others, to someone or some cause or tradition outside himself . . . strike[s] the therapeutic sensibility as intolerably oppressive, offensive to common sense and injurious to personal health and well-being."

The orientation of which Lasch speaks developed in the 1960s, a time when social commentators began to see and welcome the increasing transiency of human relationships. In *The Secular City* theologian Harvey Cox described the anonymity and mobility of the modern metropolis and insisted it was a blessing, for it delivered us from the Law and gave us choice in personal relationships, ideas and values. Tradition was disintegrating, he said, long-term acquaintanceships declining, impersonality on the upswing; we were, as a result, freer, more tolerant, more open to change. Psychologists Warren Bennis and Philip Slater were less euphoric than Cox about the increase in "quick" relationships, but in *The Temporary Society* they made one thing clear: the tide would not turn, so we had better learn to move—to be flexible, to "get love, to love and to lose love." As the divorce rate continued to climb, Nena and George O' Neill spoke of the benefits of "open marriage." And Alvin Toffler predicted in *Future Shock* that "people of the future" would know how to plug only part of their personality into any new relationship and would become adept at breaking off old ones.

In a different vein, Margaret Mead spoke of a cultural shift in the United States from "post-figuration" to "co-figuration." She meant that influence no longer flowed from elders to the young, that the shape (the *figura*) of our culture was no longer set by the past. Instead, the young, cut off by a generation gap, modeled their behavior on that of their peers and were influenced by the present.

One need not be in total agreement with these analyses to recognize that the psychotherapies propagated in the 1960s and 1970s treat their clients on a temporary basis and focus on the present. They are "co-figurative." The years required for a psychoanalysis have become the weekend required for a marathon. From one-to-one contact with an "elder" interested in a patient's past, therapy has moved to groups of peers who refuse to consider anything but the present. The objective is no longer to alter durable and resistant inner structures but to modify a segment of outer behavior, to eliminate "games" the patient is playing.

The client-centered approach of Carl Rogers, conceived in the 1940s, was an important precursor of these co-figurative therapies. Rogers was the first to relinquish the role of elder in therapy, the first to be "non-directive." To Rogers's way of thinking, the therapist's only task is to empathize with his client and "reflect" his feelings in an atmosphere of caring and warmth. Reconstructions and interpretations of the past are studiously avoided: what matters is the feeling the client articulates and the therapist clarifies in the present moment. The client's inner self is thought of as fluid, constantly changing, constantly emerging. Though client-centered therapy is neither quick therapy nor group therapy, its philosophy and techniques—and, indeed, its originator—have been easily absorbed into the group movement.

Sensitivity training originated in the same decade as client-centered therapy and was based on Kurt Lewin's field theory, another psychology of the present. Sensitivity training, however, did not become a cultural force until the late sixties, some two decades after its official birthdate. According to Kurt Back, the growth of the movement was intertwined, both as cause and effect, with the social unrest of the sixties. It finally took hold in the United States, as it failed to in Europe, because of our postwar affluence (we had the time for T-groups and the money to pay for them), because of secularization (the decline of traditional religion created a void in people's lives), and especially because of mobility. Back notes that sensitivity and encounter group centers took hold in recipient areas of internal migration in the United States, particularly in suburbs and in California. And what have they offered to people "on the move"? A new ritual expressed in the language of science that enables broken roots and severed connections to regenerate *quickly*. A chance to find iden-

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tity, to become aware of how one "comes off," even with a group of strangers. An opportunity to develop one's ability to adapt to any new situation, to become intimate in a hurry. The group trainer, therefore, steers the participants to a consideration of their own transactions and construes as escapes references to past and futures outside the group. It is most significant that the catchword of the sensitivity/encounter movement is *here-and-now,* and that the title of the popular magazine reporting on its rapid mutations is *Psychology Today.*

One of those mutations was the Gestalt therapy of the late Fritz Perls. Perls was very much an elder—a tyrant, some say—in the groups he directed; yet his therapy is predominantly co-figurative. The person in a Gestalt group's "hot seat" is forbidden to bring up his personal history; others in the group join as therapists or become the target person's "alter ego." Direct, aggressive intervention is used to get to a person's problems as quickly as possible, to get him to act them out, to make him dramatically aware of the spilts and the missing parts in his personality, and, hopefully, to enable him to construct a better whole (Gestalt) than he previously possessed. Responsibility for the future, for what happens to someone after therapy, is disclaimed. Perls wrote, "Sir, if you wanted to go crazy, commit suicide, improve, get turned on, or get an experience that would change your life, that is up to you. You came here of your own free will."

Behavior therapy, having different roots than either the client-centered, sensitivity, or Gestalt approaches, nevertheless shares their concentration on the present. Behaviorism, a distinctly American school of psychology, always has stressed that at birth man is a *tabula rasa,* a blank slate unmarked by the impress of past generations, capable of bearing whatever inscriptions the environment makes. But the behavior modification techniques that spread rapidly in the sixties and seventies carry Locke's dictum a step further: adults, thirty or forty years old, are now slates, if not blank, then at least erasable. The past has no holding power; it can be unlearned. A phobia, for example, does not lie in some durable internal structure; it is not symptomatic of a deeper disease. It is simply an overt behavior that can be disposed of.

An apparent exception to these therapies of the present is transactional analysis, originated by Erich Berne and popularized in *Games People Play, I'm OK —You're OK,* and *Born to Win.* Indeed, when TA speaks of parent and child ego-states (roughly equivalent to Freud's *superego* and *id*), it recognizes the importance of "scripts" that a person carries from the past to the present. Yet in practice transactional analysis is a close cousin of encounter-group therapy, Gestalt therapy, and even behavior therapy; it draws little or nothing from its theoretical parent, classical psychoanalysis. Indeed, Berne's original intent was to shorten the process of psychotherapy, to eliminate harmful "games" rather than to rework an entire personality. The popularity of transactional analysis, I am suggesting, like the popularity of the other new therapies, is due to its compatibility with a configurative clientele, cut off from the past, centered on the present, more and more transient.

Carl Rogers often has preached the hope offered by these new therapeutic techniques to the affluent, politically leftish, well-educated middle class. He told a graduating class at Sonoma State College of a New Man emerging from "encounter groups, sensitivity training, so-called T-Groups." The New Man "recognizes that he will be living his transient life mostly in temporary relationships and that he must be able to establish closeness quickly. He must be able to leave these close relationships behind, without excessive conflict or mourning." He has a distrust of marriage as an institution, religion as an institution, education as an institution. His culture is a "cocoon" from which he struggles to break free. "Liberated" from the past, he is "turned on" by interpersonal experience, by mediation, by drugs—by the present.

Not only is the New Man of popular psychology skilled at temporary relationships, not only is he "liberated" from the past, he also believes he carries unlimited human potential. All things seem possible now that he has left the "cocoon" of tradition, the confines of durable intimate relationships. Gurus from the East tell him that lines between himself and everything else are illusory, that his self is to become immersed in a cosmic consciousnss. Gurus from the West insist on the opposite: his self is to be asserted, expanded, and fulfilled—in Fritz Perls's words, "You do your thing and I'll do my thing." But there is a curious similarity between the transpersonal humanistic psychology of the East and the assertive humanistic psychology of the West. The two agree that the self has no limits. Therefore, says one, let it actively taste of every experience, let it become now this impulse now that, let it "expand" and "raise" its consciousness. Consciousness, of course, is never expanded in the direction of recovering early experience, for the past must be fled at all costs. Nor is there recognition of the fact that expansion can only take place by way of self-imposed frontiers that both hold a person in and give him something to go beyond.

The boundless, infinitely changeable self of human-

The self that is 'into behavior mod' shops in the supermarket of human traits for whatever it needs this year: better sexual performance, less anxiety, less weight, etc.

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istic psychology is actually a relative of behaviorism's empty, unknowable self, even though humanistic psychology considers itself distinct from behaviorism. The self that is "into behavior mod" shops in the supermarket of human traits for whatever it needs (and is featured) this year: better sexual performance, less anxiety, less weight, more assertiveness, whatever. Such a self unknowingly assumes it has no permanence, no physiological substratum that affects its traits, no early experiences that stamp indelible marks. There is no identity, no internal structure around which it scribes an ego-boundary, saying I am this way, I am not that way, for life. Humanistic psychology talks incessantly about the self, telling us either to lose it or expand it. Behaviorism ignores the self. But both, explicitly or not, preach the virtues of a fluid self, without limits, incapable of choice, incapable of loyalty to something outside itself.

Though Slater admits in *The Temporary Society* that it is difficult "to imagine ways of integrating the rearing of children with temporary systems," psychologists at large fail to notice that its New Man is a spiritual eunuch. He cannot be tied down long enough to a single place, be it spiritual or physical, to be a parent—again, spiritually or physically. Having lost a sense of historical continuity, he is incapable of identifying with predecessors or posterity and is left with the goal of psychic self-improvement. And though he speaks of mankind's unlimited potential, the truth is that his unbounded self is so dissipated, so blurred that it cannot harness the energy to create.

To its credit, psychology has devoted considerable energy to children and continually strives to identify the kinds of climate in which they flourish. It also has facilitated the escape of individuals from those pasts that deserve abandonment and helped them cope with the resultant fluidity. I would hope, however, that it will begin to teach other "skills"—permanence, loyalty, fidelity, and duty—and that it will begin to see that limited, contained, rooted selves are the only kind capable of creativity and generativity. Whether psychology will ever do so is another matter altogether.

II.

According to anthropologist Clifford Geertz, religion is a set of symbols that creates long-lasting moods and motivations in men by providing interpretations of life that seem to them uniquely realistic. Religion generates convictions about such things as birth, death, intimacy and nature by saying that to believe in this, or to act in this way, is to live in harmony with a fundamental reality. Psychology grounds a particular attitude toward life by saying it is "healthy," religion by saying it accords with the way things "really" are. Having outlined some attitudes of recent psychology toward human fertility, I would now like to bring a specific question to religion. What resources does religion have—in particular, what resources does the Judaeo-Christian symbol system have—to generate those moods and motivations that nourish such fertility? What capacity does it have to underwrite convictions about human life that stand in contrast to those of psychology's New Man?

The human imagination has always closely associated divinity and fertility. All the earth's cosmogonies, all those mythical accounts that tell the nature of things by narrating their origins, are stories of the generation of life. Indians from the Pacific Northwest speak of a woman turning into the earth, her hair becoming the trees and grass, her flesh the clay, her bones the rocks, her blood the springs of water. Children spring from her, derive nourishment from her, and ultimately return to her. Polynesians describe the beginnings as Heaven and Earth in intercourse; children confined in the darkness between them push them apart and see the light of day for the first time. California Indians say the

world was made by a turtle who dove to the bottom of the sea for a speck of dirt and by a dove who found a single grain of meal; the dirt and the meal are combined and grow into an earth covered with seeds and fruit. Jews and Christians tell of a God who fills an eternal void with the simple power of his word and commands his creatures to be fruitful, multiply and fill his earth. To live in a world with plants and animals that reproduce themselves, and to be fertile oneself, these creation stories say, is to be favored by the forces of the universe.

Religion, too, has always incorporated in its ritual the experience of returning to "the beginnings," to the sacred time and place of creation. The experience of renewing contact with roots, of being cleansed by living in the idealized time of the ancestors, is indeed a fertile one. David Bakan has argued that the insights of psychoanalysis came to Sigmund Freud at a time in his life when he felt rejected by the Gentile world of science and so returned home, psychologically, to a Jewish mystical culture. That culture regarded human beings religiously the way Freud "discovered" them to be in a secular context. The generative and creative people I know, religious or not, are individuals who maintain a

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strong sense of connection with their origins and do not hesitate to draw on them.

Despite the constricted understanding of fertility found in documents like *Humanae Vitae*, there are symbols within their parent tradition that are capable of supporting fertility in the fullest sense of the word. May I suggest only a few?

1. *The Demanding Fidelity of Yahweh.* The relationship that Yahweh insists on between himself and his people is one of permanence, exclusivity and loyalty. It is hardly "open." On Sinai, God tells the Hebrews, "I am Yahweh your God . . . you shall have no gods except me." Demands and promises are made; a covenant is struck. In current psychological jargon, "boundaries" are firmly established. As the Old and New Testaments unfold, the promises are not always kept, the boundaries not always observed. Yet the covenant—the "frame" or "ground rules" of the relationship—is returned to and ratified again and again. In the Old Testament God is a king who punishes violations of the boundaries; in the New Testament He is a Father who mercifully welcomes prodigals who stray beyond them. In both, the frame of the relationship is indispensable; it creates the trust that allows love to develop.

To take the relationship between Yahweh and his people as the prototype of human relationships is to assert that what is essential to intimacy is the assurance of fidelity, the conviction that the other will always be there and on your side. This fidelity is not the "unconditional positive regard" of client-centered therapy, for it is a fidelity that sets conditions, makes demands, and insists on a certain closedness in relationships. I am suggesting that the security of such confines sets the stage for true intimacy and, later, for generativity.

2. *Humanity's Stewardship.* Political scientist Patrick Dobel, writing in the *Christian Century* last October, has taken issue with ecologists who claim that the command in Genesis to dominate nature has led to Western man's exploitation of the world's resources. Dobel believes an exegesis of the Old Testament would show that man is not to be the absolute lord of nature but its trustee. The earth is owned by God. It is bestowed upon humanity "for all generations" and strict limits are placed upon its use. Judging from the parables of the Good Steward and the Talents in the New Testament, each generation is not merely to preserve God's state but also to improve it. The world is not to be left in its natural state; it is to be acted upon and controlled for the betterment of mankind. Its resources are to be husbanded but not exhausted, passed on in better condition than they were received.

Human beings who regard themselves as stewards take a far different stance toward their own life than the New Man of recent psychology. They believe that their life is owned not by themselves but by God. If life is something received, it is something that ultimately has to be passed on. Consequently, rights to self-fulfillment are tempered by duties to predecessors and successors. In contrast to the position taken in *Humanae Vitae*, stewards regard their reproductive processes as part of a heritage that is to be acted upon and controlled for the well-being of posterity.

3. *Pruning.* The steward treats nature the way a farmer treats his orchard. Reverence does not demand that the trees be allowed to grow untrammeled. It requires instead that they be cut and limited, sometimes extensively, so that they bring forth an abundant harvest.

Metaphors of fruitfulness appear frequently in the Gospels and barrenness is treated with impatience. A tree that fails to produce good fruit will be put to the axe and thrown into the fire. The kingdom of God will be taken from the chief priests and the scribes and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Jesus curses a fig tree with nothing but leaves, even though it is not the season for figs, and the tree withers and dies. Later, he likens himself to a vine, his disciples to the branches, his Father to the vinedresser. "Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. You are pruned already." The disciples are commissioned to "go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last." To do so they must remain in contact with the vine and they must be cut back. To be fertile one cannot grow without limitation.

4. *Spiritual Parenthood.* The Catholic Church has long been the home of "fathers" and "mothers" who are celibate and childless. Such symbols of spiritual parenthood are of great importance during a time when it is imperative to restrict population growth while nourishing feelings of fertility. What an example of generativity is offered by someone like Mother Teresa of India!

Though I have not observed firsthand the church's examination of its tradition of celibacy, I wonder how much emphasis is being given to spiritual fatherhood and motherhood in emerging rationales. (Donald Goergen's *The Sexual Celibate* said next to nothing of these archetypal Catholic symbols.) To choose celibacy is to place a limit on oneself so that one can care for more human beings. It is an act of pruning that remains an enigma to those expanding their consciousness in all directions.

5. *The Eucharist.* The Gospel account of the Last Supper begins with Jesus's realization that his hour has come. The prospect of death, a death that will extend

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the fidelity of Yahweh, heightens his concern for posterity. In a simple gesture of sharing bread and wine, he passes his life on to others.

In the Eucharist Christ is symbolically transmitted from generation to generation, so that for millennia his followers have been able to return to the beginnings, participate in their own creation, and nourish themselves on the person of their founder. The core ritual of Christianity is a guarantee of continuity and generativity through time. It reaffirms that one is a steward, not an owner, of one's life.

American Catholicism consists not only of symbols like these but also of experiences that may appear merely incidental. For me, the experience was one of growing up in a family and an urban neighborhood where most everyone shared the same world-view. No one talked about religion but everyone did religion. It was part of the atmosphere. I lived in a "post-figurative" culture—rigid, to be sure, and incapable of change; but it was not, at least not to me, who could walk unannounced into half the houses or apartments on the street, oppressive. It was a secure, limited, rooted environment. I knew my place. There were numerous people, numerous "fathers" and "mothers" and "sisters" whom I pleased and displeased, but on whose word I always counted.

Such a setting was neither uniquely Catholic nor uniquely American, but it happens to be the one that shaped the lives of many American Catholics of my generation. As I stepped from that environment to the one I now inhabit—the mobile, secular, co-figurative world of the psychologized affluent—I could not help but feel, somewhere in my bones, the loss of something of value. I argue now for bounded relationships, for connection with the past, for selves with limits, for fertility, because doing so, in a way, recaptures my own, admittedly idealized, beginnings.

Today, the god-like impulse of fertility, a source of so much ambivalence, will have to be nurtured, controlled, redirected, its proper place in sex asserted. In this task, there is much in the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and moral resources of American Catholicism to draw upon—in the riches of the Judaeo-Christian symbol structure, in our concrete experiences of family, church and neighborhood.

THE FARMERS' STRIKE

HAROLD F. BREIMYER

Plight and prospects

The most improbable event of 1978 has to be the spectacle of farmers in tractor cabs and coal miners in headlanterned regalia competing for news lineage and public sympathy.

The farmers were the ones out of character. Coal miners on strike have been a part of the scene since tha days of the Shakespeare-quoting John L. Lewis. But farmers have been notoriously anti-organized labor. They have declaimed especially against industrial unions in industries that supply farm inputs, such as tractor manufacture. Big farmers on the West Coast have fought Cesar Chavez tooth and nail.

Yet in the winter of 1977-78 a sizeable number of farmers from the Great Plains, Midwest and South declared that without a promise of "parity" prices they would "strike." Although the verb was given various interpretations the upshot was that they would not plant their crops in the spring—or, some said, they would plant only half their normal acreage. Meantime, various contingents engaged in scattered incidents of harassment; and delegates stalked the halls of Congress and the offices of belabored Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bergland.

Farmers' unrest and demonstrations are by no means new. They are as old as the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794. Never before, though, has the industrial term of a strike been borrowed. If the 1794 event was rebellion, in the early 1930s farmers staged a "holiday movement," and in the later 1950s and 1960s Oren Lee Staley led his National Farmers Organization into "holding actions."

Along with their staged visibility, participants in the newly born American Agriculture Movement shouted their economic distress. Perhaps more than ever before, farmers' wives joined in testifying to the financial pinch they were feeling.

Symbol of what AAM farmers asked for was price parity. Parity as a word is an abstraction signifying equity or equality. In agricultural affairs it has a special meaning. It refers to a constant buying-power exchange ratio for farm products. The term dates from 1921 when George Peek, a tractor manufacturer, proclaimed that farmers should be able to buy, from the proceeds of selling a given quantity of wheat, hogs, or milk, the same number of shirts, hats, bags of twine,

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or *tractors* as they could buy in the pre-World-War-I period of 1910-14. In the New Deal legislation of the 1930s parity was given statutory status.

When measured against that 1910-14 standard farmers have recently been badly off indeed. In 1977 they received for the products they sold an average of only 67 percent of parity prices. Critics reply, however, that 1910-14 is too ancient a base for reliable comparisons. Farmers now produce so much more wheat and corn per acre and per man, it is said, that somewhat lower price ratios can bring acceptable incomes. Those critics could cite the statistic that farm products have not averaged full parity since 1952.

A bid for public sympathy and legislative relief rests less on dry statistics than on what is generally called the public image of agriculture. That image has been favorable. City dwellers from San Diego to Augusta envisage the farmer as the epitome of industriousness if not heroism, as he risks his money and labor against variable weather and uncertain markets. Farmers' pleas in 1977-78 that they are under-rewarded have been accepted at face value.

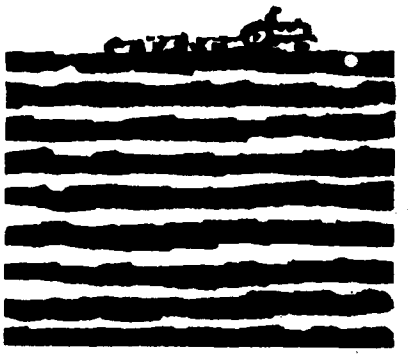
What do protesting farmers want, it may be asked. What is their legislative program? Initially a few otherworldly protesters called for a decree by government that products could be sold only at parity price. Week by week political positions became more carefully reasoned. Some proposals were ambitious. One influential delegation presented to the U.S. Congress a program calling for commodity marketing quotas for individual farmers. Only if each farmer will restrict his marketings in proportion to the taking power of the market could prices be kept at parity, the group said. The economics was sound but the (farm) politics questionable: the majority of U.S. farmers resist tight control over their production and marketings.

The practical political outcome, a mere echo of announced aspirations, was some modification of the terms of the existing farm law, the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977. That law provides for voluntary idling of land, in return for which farmers are eligible for price support loans on their products and for direct "deficiency" payments from the Treasury. They also get free insurance against natural disaster in crop raising. In March Secretary Bergland added the option whereby a participating farmer could idle an additional acreage of land and be paid for doing so.

How valid are the lamentations farmers raised during the winter of 1977-78? Any answer to this question is judgmental. A few observations may nevertheless be offered.

As is typical in human affairs, we find a mixture of genuine and strategically-proclaimed distress, of valid and invalid citations of data, and of workable and unworkable solutions. But as also is common where human psychology is involved, the conscious and subconscious get interchanged. Subconsciously—subliminally might be a better adverb—the protests may be grounded solidly in terms, and for reasons, that most of the protesters do not perceive.

Some farmers are in fact in desperate circumstances. Some others are well off. Not a few are rich. What is more at stake, even though not clearly understood, is the survivability of the kind of agriculture that has been the tradition since our nation's founding. An agriculture of small entrepreneurial holdings (usually called the family farm) may be on the way out; the farmers in their diesel tractors might be almost the last exponents. Yet, paradoxically, the kind of relief the



tractor-driving farmers ask for might destroy them even faster.

These summary judgments will now be explained.

First of all, it is true, as the protesting farmers remind us, that today's agriculture requires very large financial outlays. This is a main point of contrast with its agrarian antecedent. Much money is needed not only for original investment in land, but also for periodic purchases of machinery and annual spending for fertilizer, fuel, and pesticides. Financial risks therefore are very high. They are a heavy burden: for the family farmer who has no outside resources, unfavorable events can be damaging.

Unfavorable events there have been. In the wheat country there has been a sharp drop in the price of wheat, as that grain swung from world deficit to world surplus. In the Southeast, devastating drought sapped farmers' financial reserves.

Another "unfavorable event" involves human error but is an understandable aftermath of the boom years of the middle 1970s. During the several years when world scarcity brought escalating prices for grains and soybeans, agriculture went into an investment ecstasy. Established farmers "levered" themselves into buying more land. They had to fight off nonfarmers, some of them sheltered by income tax rules. Alongside them were young farmers, eager to set up their households, who accepted the faith that the world needed our food and prices could never descend again. Some young farm families took on indebtedness of a size that to old-timers seemed astronomical.

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Hence, four categories of farmers have found themselves in serious trouble. They are the wheat producers, the drought-struck farmers of the Southeast, the land-hungry older farmers who overextended themselves, and the younger men who find their illusions dispelled and money gone—and who feel betrayed.

These are the four categories who have been most instrumental in the "strike" and the American Agriculture Movement.

Their position, however, does not indicate accurately the financial picture of agriculture as a whole. As a result of the inflation of values, U.S. agriculture as a single entity has never been in better position. It is Gibraltar-strong. On January 1, 1978 total farm assets were valued at a huge $730 billion. Of this $695 billion was physical assets. Against these was a debt of $119 billion, leaving an equity of $611 billion. This is almost a quarter million dollars per farm.

Moreover, several kinds of enterprise are doing well. Hogs and dairy cattle are in fine position. Beef cattle have been in the doldrums owing to a combination of cyclical overstocking and tax-subsidized competition, but the price cycle is turning upward.

Even wheat prices are a little higher. And the 1977 farm law, as Secretary Bergland points out so tiresomely often, at least gives more federal aid than the 1973 law did. Its terms are fairly modest, to be sure.

What we have had during the 1970s is a sizable redistribution of wealth and income within agriculture. Established farmers who have ridden the inflation elevator upward, together with well-to-do nonfarmers—both exploiting income tax rules—have crowded underfinanced other farmers and especially young farmers virtually out of the picture. Many are hanging on by a thread, including the non-foreclosure policy of the Farmers Home Administration.

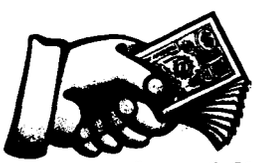
And to interpret the paradox mentioned above, if the government were to give a big boost to farm product prices, the price of land, now beginning to lose some steam, would spurt skyward again and stay out of the reach of young farmers.

Young farmers are probably the key to the future of the American Agriculture Movement. To date they have straw-grabbed in desperation. Many will eventually discover that their dilemma sinks deeper than the price of wheat or cattle.

Young farmers' present peril brings into focus the fundamental question of who is to be privileged to own land in these United States of America, and under what terms to work it. Current trends that favor the well financed and tax-sheltered older farmers and nonfarmers over new young farmers will, if continued, convert agriculture to hereditary and absentee landholding, plus part-time farms around cities. There will be no room for new family-farmer blood. It remains to be seen whether its young-farmer contingent forces the AAM to address this basic issue.

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

RALPH C. CHANDLER



A view from history and public administration

During the past seven years public attention has been focused on the problem of ethics in an unprecedented way. Forty-six of the fifty states have enacted new ethics legislation in this period, or they have significantly amended existing laws. Three of the four remaining states, Nevada, New Hampshire and Vermont, have ethics legislation pending before their legislative houses. Only Mississippi has taken no action in this regard.

So active have been the states in the ethics area, in fact, that the National Municipal League has established a clearinghouse in New York just to collect, classify and distribute legislative acts and executive orders now appearing on the subject.

At the federal level the House of Representatives on March 2, 1977, overwhelmingly adopted House Resolution 287, described by Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. (D.-Mass.) as "the toughest ethics code of any legislative body in the country."

Seven days later the House by a vote of 410-1 adopted a resolution to establish a Select Committee on Ethics to implement and write the code into statutory law. Thus what began as a series of amendments to the House rules is now intended to subject violators to criminal penalties and permit investigations of alleged abuses by federal law enforcement agencies.

On April 1, 1977, the United States Senate adopted

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an ethics code even broader than the House version, intending it by the end of the first session of the 95th Congress to cover all federal employees. Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd (D.-W.Va.) argued on the floor that "the necessity of the times," and the "climate created by the errant actions of a minority of public officials," demanded the Senate adopt such a code to restore public confidence in Congress.

Some would argue from history that this apparently unprecedented attention to ethics in government is not unprecedented at all. An influential new book entitled *Corruption in the American Political System*, maintains, for example, that corruption has been so systemic in the United States for so long that the reformers who not infrequently arise should be less interested in correcting the "evil man" the system occasionally produces than in restructuring the system itself.

It can also be argued, looking through a theological window, that since complex governmental systems such as ours are changed only incrementally, and since a basic restructuring of the American political system is hardly possible short of an unlikely revolution, we are left to live in the short-run of trying to achieve approximate justice, and that we must work out even approximate justice in ambiguous circumstances.

In this view the existential question comes to be: how can public administrators properly plant, bring to flower and keep weeded a *personal* code of ethical performance which both meets the requirements of the law and adequately takes into account the complexities of situations they encounter almost daily in the real world: situations which demand discretion and sometimes demand decisions on the margin of the law.

Two books might occur to the reader at this point. One is Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics*, published an intellectual millennium ago, in 1966, and the other, the book of the prophet Jeremiah, written more recently in the 7th Century B.C. Fletcher agrees with Alfred North Whitehead that "the simple-minded use of the notion of 'right or wrong' is one of the chief obstacles to the progress of understanding." and Jeremiah summarizes the accumulated wisdom of ancient Israel in the 31st chapter of his book, in which he represents Yahweh as saying God's law would be planted deep within his people; it would be written not on their law books, but on their hearts.

The historical record sustains the view that corruption is endemic in the American political system. From the Yazoo land fraud in the 1790s to the bribery of members of Congress by officials of the Second United States Bank in the 1830s, to the scandals surrounding land acquisition by the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1870s, to Teapot Dome and Elk Hills in the 1920s, to the revelations of kickbacks in tax settlements by collectors of internal revenue in the 1950s, to the Watergate phenomenon of the 1970s, and many other instances in between, our national history can be read as a litany of avarice and greed. Carl Snyder in his book *Capitalism the Creator* calls the characterics of the sharpdealer the great forces in the building of America.

Consider the opinion of Henry Steele Commager. In an article entitled "A Historian Looks at Our Political Morality," he prefers not to address individual culpability in our national past, but to inquire into certain presuppositional questions of national policy. These have to do with our collective responsibility for what he describes as "the conquest and decimation of the Indian," slavery defended as a moral good, the child labor of the Industrial Revolution explained as the necessary price of progress, and the Vietnam War pursued as the logical result of "better dead than Red." Commager concludes that ". . . we must square our conduct with principles of law and of morality. . . ."

Carl Sandburg in his role of poet as well as historian has a kinder indictment. He says we're all liars, just different kinds.

> People lie because they don't remember
> clear what they say.
> People lie because they can't help
> making a story better than it was
> the way it happened.
> People tell white lies so as to be decent
> to others.
> People lie in a pinch, hating to do it,
> but lying on because it might be worse.
> And people lie just to be liars
> for crooked gain.
> What sort of liar are you?
> Which of these liars are you?

Although Snyder, Commager and Sandburg are competent historians and base their value judgments on lives of scholarship and reflection, other jurors may prefer to have relevant facts laid before them for their independent determination of the prevalence of corruption in American government. The following data represent part of the basis for the contention by historians that modern legislators are dealing with an endemic problem.

Alexander Hamilton had written in the *Federalist Papers* in 1788 that

> The aim of every political constitution is, or ought to be, first to obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society; and in the next place to take the most effectual precautions for keeping them virtuous . . ."

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The ink was hardly dry on the *Federalist Papers* when the Yazoo land fraud case came to light in 1795. The state of Georgia, its legislature bribed by New England financiers, sold to private speculators most of what is today the states of Alabama and Mississippi at one and one-half cents an acre. Involved in the graft were two United States Senators, including Robert Morris of Pennsylvania, two Congressmen, and three leading jurists, including Associate Supreme Court Justice James Wilson.

The story is celebrated and involved and eventually resulted in a major Supreme Court decision, *Fletcher v. Peck* (1810). The speculators won out, finally, because the Marshall Court held invalid an act of a subsequent Georgia legislature repealing the sale. The bribers kept their profits largely through the efforts of their sagacious lawyer, one Alexander Hamilton.

During this same period the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Jonathan Dayton (1798-1800), was driven from office for embezzling some $15,000 from the pay and travel allowance of members.

In 1833, United States Senator Daniel Webster sent the following message to the president of the Second United States Bank, whose charter was before Congress for renewal:

> I believe that my retainer has not been renewed or *refreshed* as usual. If it be wished that my relation to the Bank should be continued, it may be well to send me the usual retainer.

Bank President Nicholas Biddle came across with "loans" of $17,782.86 for Daniel Webster. Biddle also refreshed the bank accounts of 54 other members of Congress, including Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun.

Throughout the second half of the 19th Century there was a near fusion of economic and political power in the United States as railroad and other economic interests largely controlled several state legislatures, notably that of Iowa, and influenced a working majority in the United States Senate.

Most remarkable among the schemes of the agents of the Union Pacific Railroad was the creation of a bogus construction company, the Crédit Mobilier, which distributed its stock to members of Congress in exchange for Congressmen looking the other way as the profits of the company reached enormous proportions. A major source of profits was congressional grants to the railroad for completion of the final 667 miles of the Union Pacific.

Another low point in the administration of public affairs in the United States came in the Harding Administration when Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall was charged with accepting over $385,000 from the oil companies leasing the Teapot Dome reserves in Wyoming and the Elk Hills reserves in California.

And as a final example, in 1951 the Douglas Committee on Ethical Standards in Government disclosed a decade of kickbacks in tax settlements by collectors of internal revenue in New York, Boston, Detroit, St. Louis and San Francisco. In the same year Senator J. William Fulbright said of his investigations of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation:

> As our study of the R.F.C. progressed, we were confronted more and more with problems of ethical conduct . . . How do we deal with those who under the guise of friendship accept favors which offend the spirit of the law, but do not violate the letter? What of the men outside Government who suborn those inside it? . . . Who is more at fault, the bribed or the bribers?

One might wonder if the revelations of the Douglas Committee in 1951 would have produced the spate of ethics legislation apparent today if the news media had in fact covered those hearings as assiduously as the Ervin Committee was covered 22 years later. In his book *It Didn't Start With Watergate* that unobjective journalist Victor Lasky quotes Fulbright as saying

> The Watergate was ballooned up into an enormous issue. People like those two reporters who uncovered it for the *Washington Post* and the *Post* itself—they had discovered a whole new world. People make reputations overnight discovering some new scandal. They're still doing it, they just love it.

Lasky further quotes former Representative Jerome R. Waldie (D.-Calif.) a leader of the anti-Nixon forces in the House, as saying he doubted whether the President would have been forced out of office "if the press had not desired it."

Is Watergate unprecedented?

Or is the press coverage the only thing different about it. Is the Watergate scandal so precedented in American history that indeed it exists on a continuum of scandal, and may not be qualitatively different from other scandals? If Watergate *is* different, is the difference only in the magnitude of the President's personal involvement in it, and in the lies he told?

But Carl Sandburg said we're all liars.

Watergate is different, but not primarily for the reasons listed above. Put in simple terms, previous corruption was about money. Watergate was about power.

It is as though the United States has finally come to Plato's discussion of the foundation of political authority. In the *Republic* the sophist Thrasymachus said the foundation of political authority is power. Socrates said that politics is also a system of obligations and a system of values. Have we reached the point in our national history at which this is no longer a theoretical discussion?

Theoretical discussions bore us. The expanse and abundance of America are largely responsible for that. We didn't have time for theory. We had before us in the 19th and early 20th Century the practical problems of nation-building, moneymaking, inventing, fighting wars, technologizing, and doing right; and these were all

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proper activities of Puritan ethics. They so subsumed the more modest interests of our founding fathers and an occasional jurist, however, that the processes of defining probity and managing scarcity were mental and administrative exercises we didn't get much experience at.

We were not entirely unprepared for the current tasks of public administration, however. We do know how we *feel* in this country, and we did not like the feel of the sophist position at Watergate. Politics is not just a power game. It's not okay to play dirty. Dirty play may continue, and the smart players may not get caught, but the *definition* of politics as a sordid business did not receive the sanction of the commonweal.

And so legislative bodies all over the country, embarrassed and quickened by an historical record of scandal culminating in Watergate, have acted to bring politics and ethics back together again. Is the corrective legislation hitting the mark? Is it about the right problem?

A View from Public Administration

Historians point to the systemic nature of corruption in the government of the United States. Public administrationists have looked at Watergate and related shenanigans for four years now and concluded in some quarters that these events also represent a breakdown of public administration theory.

Reflecting on the lessons of Watergate for public administration, James L. Sundquist noted that the profession devoted 40 years to aggrandizing presidential power. Rather than believe Lord Acton, that "power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely," public administrationists preferred to believe Louis Brownlow when he said,

> During the whole history of the thirty-two presidents, not one has been recreant to his high trust—none has used his power to aggrandize himself at the expense of our settled institutions.

That was a marginal statement even in 1947.

Public administration's emphasis on a strong executive did not start with Luther Gulick, but this Professor of Municipal Services and Administration at Columbia U. certainly articulated the doctrine in a way which admirably served the disposition of Franklin Roosevelt, as well as the needs of the nation at that time.

In 1936 he wrote "It is clear from long experience in human affairs that . . . a single directing executive authority" is mandatory for solving the problems of governmental organization. From the time the Brownlow Committee on Administrative Management, of which Gulick was a member, recommended to President Roosevelt the establishment of an Executive Office of the President, the movement toward the President's increased command and control was also a movement toward the imperial presidency.

The White House staff grew from 37 members under Herbert Hoover to more than 500 under Richard Nixon, and the Executive Office of the Presidency, with its proliferation of boards, committees and special groups, mushroomed from 1,175 in the late 1950s to roughly 5,000 at the end of 1976. The changing attitude of the staff, with its steady accretion of command and control power, was described by George Reedy, President Johnson's press secretary, as "the heel click at the other end of the wire." It fitted naturally, he said, with the style of a royal court provided with a swimming pool, masseur, telephone in every bathroom and a helicopter at the push of a button, all to serve the needs of a single man and shield him from ordinary discomforts.

The administrative tools the Chief Administrator was given to use for the aggrandizement of his office: budgeting, legislative clearance and the preparation of government reorganization plans, for example, were supplemented in the 1950s with a development public administrationists could not have foreseen: the rise of the political technician.

These technicians are the people who know how to package and sell a candidate. They are the public relations men, advertising men, television directors, fundraisers, speechwriters, and organizaitonal experts who make up a personal campaign coterie not necessarily raisers, speechwriters, and organizational experts who candidate is successful, they accompany him into the corridors of power.

That this should be so—that the Haldemans and Ehrlichmans should be the ones to help the President see that the laws are faithfully executed—is a direct result of the Pendelton Act. Where there is no patronage in the public service, there is no effective party machinery. This has proven to be a two-edged sword in American history.

Patronage and its twin, corruption, were countenanced in the big city machines of America because, in the words of Martin Lomansey, the political boss of Boston in 1915:

> I think that there's got to be in every ward somebody that any bloke can come to—no matter what he's done—and get help. Help, you understand; none of your law and justice, but help.

This is not entirely an unethical position.

If the machine was a fount of favors which generated political obligations paid on election day, it also generated something else: respect toward the public on the part of the practicing politician. That's why he balanced his ticket, secured advantages for his constituents, and served the "public interest" as he scented it. He stayed in office that way.

The political technician, on the other hand, typically has no such experience in democratic politics. His experience is not so much in service as in manipulation. His loyalty is not to party or a principle but to the leader

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in whose entourage he serves. The law for him is instrumental. It can be bent or broken when necessary.

When Luther Gulick and other public administrationists transposed the literature of business administration into the service of public institutions in the 1930s they had no idea that political technicians would eventually transpose the philosophy of corporate life into public administration as well. This is the philosophy that in a corporate struggle the victorious faction takes over the company.

The issue hung in the balance for some months in 1973 and 1974 as to whether the press and the United States House of Representatives would successfully remind the technicians that the people still own the company.

But what of the structure of things now? A political candidate still must practice the public relations game of image manipulation. He still will be tempted to fall victim to the arrogance of the technicist world view, especially if he is successful.

The legislative responses are appropriate enough. At the federal level, however, neither of the stringent ethics codes passed by the House on March 2 or by the Senate on April 1 of 1977 speaks across the separation of powers to aggrandized presidential power.

Again, public administration theory is of doubtful help. Many practitioners would still agree with Paul Appleby's judgment about presidential power in 1945: "through Congress, and through elections, it is a power popularly controlled." In this view it will take a long time before a President will again embark on any such headstrong foreign adventure as Lyndon Johnson undertook in Vietnam, or on any such exercise in megalomania as Richard Nixon undertook at Watergate.

The modesty of Jimmy Carter's initial days in office support this view. *New York Times* correspondent Hedrick Smith has written the following vignette to illustrate the sensitivity of the new President to the cult of the presidency which has developed since the early 1960s.

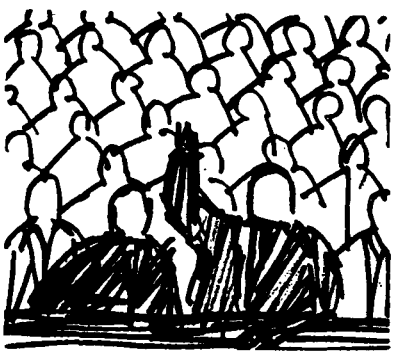
> A few days after his election in November, Jimmy Carter boarded the airborne palace called Air Force One for a flight to a vacation hideaway and declared with obvious relish: "This is the one I've been waiting for."
>
> After he was publicly chided for so quickly abandoning the populist propensities of his electoral campaign in favor of the seductive perquisites of Presidential power, the chastened Mr. Carter passed up the return flight on the Presidential jet and flew home on a more humble commercial aircraft. In that hasty retreat and in other ways, the new President has shown he understands that informality and openness are needed in his Administration. . . .

Sundquist rightfully observed that public administrators can point with pride to the fact that career civil servants were tarnished very little by Watergate. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, notably the Criminal Division, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Central Intelligence Agency in fact acted as a restraint on the President. This is why the "plumbers" were forced to operate directly out of the White House.

But dependence upon bureaucratic restraints to assure ethical behavior on the part of the Chief Administrator is a thin reed indeed. We must simply admit at this point that there is no general rule of law save impeachment proceedings which can restrain a President from the abuse or misuse of power.

The houses of Congress, however, have not only passed comprehensive codes for their own members, but are currently taking steps to have the provisions of these codes enacted into statutory law to cover all federal employees.

President Carter has asked Congress to require annual public financial disclosure statements from top Executive Branch officials and to prohibit them from lobbying their former agencies for at least one year after leaving



government. He also asked that a special prosecutor's office be created to prosecute misconduct by high-ranking Executive Branch officials and that an Office of Ethics be established within the Civil Service Commission.

In the House and Senate codes, office accounts are banned; outside income from speaking engagements, articles and other sources is limited; gifts from lobbyists are restricted; travel by lame duck members is prohibited; financial disclosure is widened; and so forth. Representative David R. Obey (D.-Wis.), chairman of the commission which drafted the House code, said it was designed to assure that "members are not cashing in on their positions of influence."

Likewise the states have acted vigorously to elevate their standards of public service. The state legislation generally falls into four categories: (1) The specification of acts which are prohibited to public officials, candidates and employees; (2) The enumeration of codes of ethics applicable to public servants; (3) The requirement of certain procedures to prevent conflicts of interest; and (4) The requirement of public disclosure of the financial interests of public officials, candidates for office, and

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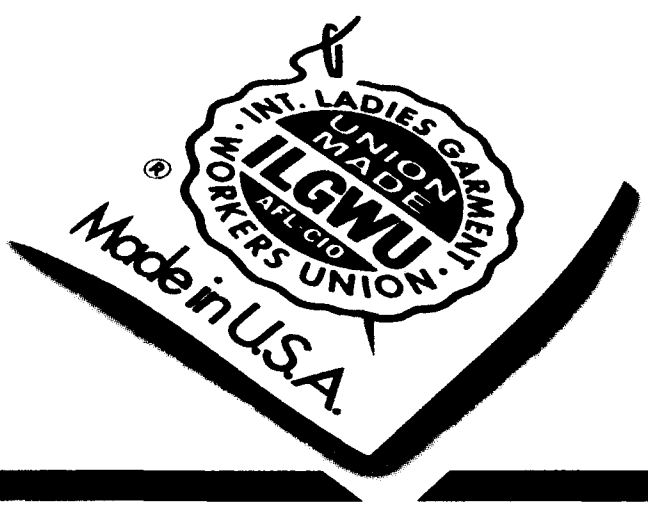
Look for the union label.



Think of it as a little American flag in your clothes.

Union Label Department, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union,
22 West 38 Street, New York, N.Y. 10018.

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certain government employees and members of their immediate families.

"Public officials" are of basically two types in the legislation and in practice. These are elected officials and professional administrators. The former often delegates discretion to the latter. If this were not so, legislatures would be paralyzed by interest group conflict. Few laws could be written in broad and vague terms, leaving details to be worked out later. The bureaucracy, then, in working out the finer points of policy, often enters into the same kind of bargaining process as characterized the original policy discussion. The question of how much discretion should be permitted civil servants, and how to make its exercise responsible, occupies a thoughtful place in current public administration literature.

In discussing ethical guidelines for professional administrators in the *Public Administration Review*, George A. Graham has pinpointed the problem of discretion:

> Where there is discretion, there is uncertainty, and there may be conflicting obligations and loyalties. In dealing with this situation, the administrator is subject to a double hierarchy of authority, one impersonal and one personal, which defines his obligations. The hierarchy of law (constitutional, statutory, administrative) is impersonal. The chain of direction or command, into which he fits somewhere, is quite personal.

Graham goes on to say that general law must be *interpreted*, and that the courts seldom get around to definitive interpretations on the vast majority of issues which arise administratively. Thus administrators must delineate the law. Their policies, programs, instructions, rules, procedures, and day-to-day decisions may not always agree with the intent of the elected officials who broadly structured the law in the first place, or the courts who are too busy to define it.

This no man's land of what is lawful, or what is wise, or what is in the public interest, is where the difficult ethical issues lie for public administrators.

It is against *this* reality that the ethics legislation in the states ought finally to be measured. Forty-three states, for example, have legislated on conflict of interest and financial disclosure for public administrators.

California, in mandating the formulation of ethics codes by each state agency, includes a requirement that each agency enumerate the positions within the agency which could affect outside financial interests. The occupant of each such position must file an annual statement of his financial status to show it has not been improved by agency decisions. New York has a similar requirement for selected state employees, and has a Board of Public Disclosure to monitor compliance.

The student of public administration might ask at this point: Do these rather onerous reporting requirements with their resulting deprivation of privacy really address the ethical dimension of the job of the public administrator? Is the real ethical problem about money? It is tempting to formulate laws about conflict of interest and financial disclosure and feel that the ethics job has been done. In many ways, however, this represents a retreat into legalism.

The problem of administrative ethics continues to be one of discretion, of judgment, of interpretation, of definition of the public interest and pursuit of the public good. Good ethics legislation will facilitate solutions to these and other conundrums of statecraft.

A piece of legislation which appears to appreciate some of the dilemmas of public administrators is Michigan's Public Act 196, enacted in 1973.

The act established a state board of ethics which renders both decisions and advisory opinions. The former occurs when there has been a formal complaint filed with the board against a public official or employee. The latter occurs when a public official finds himself in a questionable position regarding what constitutes propriety in handling the public's business. Without an adversary proceeding he or she can receive guidance.

This kind of procedure is flexible, and it seems infinitely more fair to the public administrator. It is probably more constitutional, as well. The Michigan experience has been evaluated as follows:

> The mere fact that a public official might be evaluated against ethical criteria may result in many officials avoiding the risks of improper conduct because of the difficulty of carrying it off without disclosure and public censure.
>
> The types of problems that come before the Board of Ethics are not of venal people attempting to take advantage of their public trust, but rather conscientious public servants who have real questions about the propriety of their actions. . . . The people who present requests to the Board are honest people with real problems.

A view of ethics from American history leaves the question of whether federal legislation has attacked the right problem: aggrandized presidential power. A view from public administration leaves the same kind of question about federal and state legislation from another perspective: does the reform movement understand the bureaucratic and human context of the administrator's discretionary choices?

Please do not misunderstand me. I favor ethics legislation, including legislation about conflict of interest and financial disclosure. It sets a tone and a level of expectation which permeates the governmental organization. But ethics is much more than legislation. If it is *only* legislation, in fact, it is decidedly unethical. For ethics presupposes a context of personal principle and of moral commitment which rules and rulesmakers cannot touch.

As Frank Getlein wrote in *Commonweal* in response

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to the new ethics codes in the House and Senate:

> A code of ethics, after all, is something one believes in, or something the members of a given society subscribe to; it is not something imposed, it is something observed because it is thought to be right. Least of all is a code of ethics something drawn up by a committee. God knows what the Ten Commandments would have looked like if composed by a committee of proto-Talmudic scholars. . . .

The reason Jesus got into considerable trouble with the theocracy of his day was that he maintained the law did not necessarily have anything to do with ethical behavior. One could be steeped in the law and not love. And love, Paul Tillich was to add sometime later, is the ultimate law because it is the negation of law; it is absolute because it concerns everything concrete.

Is there anything practical in this theological jargon? Its truth doesn't have to lie in its practicality, but it does happen to be practical. It gives us a reason not to be cynical.

The ethics legislation recently enacted is not going to solve the problem of corruption in American government, for several reasons. One is that the historians are right: corruption is endemic in the American system. Another is that the public administrationists are also right: discretion is not a suitable subject for legislation. A third is that even if one and two above were not true, most of the new ethics legislation misses the mark anyway. It is about money, while Watergate and the cult of the presidency have taken a quantum leap into a more insidious source of corruption than money.

So, practically speaking, let us not expect too much from the legislation. True, it will make potential violators more circumspect. It will make President Carter more humble. But whatever Mr. Carter's predilections toward humility, he will find in time that the presidency shapes him more than he shapes it.

And then, alas, there is original sin. There is the imperfectibility of man. But there is also American man's stubborn refusal to admit that the best he can do is to approximate justice in his institutions and in himself. His tolerance for ambiguity remains low; his struggle for the right remains his most obvious, and admirable, characteristic; and where is the repository of the right but in the law?

That eminent philosopher Garry Trudeau makes the point in a Doonesbury comic strip shortly after Watergate. A law professor is telling his class that law schools must do much more than simply teach the law. They much teach "its spirit, its moral essence," and then drawing himself up dramatically the professor adds, "Right and Wrong 10-A is one such stab in the dark."

There is a right and a wrong, of course, but most often there is something in between. There is freedom. Law tries to escape from it; love tries to embrace it; and for a very long time ethical and political systems have tried to reach some sort of compromise with it. There is only one sure thing about the moving target of ethical and political obligation: it is two sides of the same coin. Rousseau probably said it best when he said those who treat politics and ethics apart will never understand either one.

BATTLE CRY

THE SCREEN

Until a few years ago, all most of us knew about Chile was that it's a country south of the equator which has winter when we have summer and vice-versa. The other thing we know now, of course, is that a Marxist who was duly elected president of Chile, Salvador Allende Gossens, was murdered in a *coup d'état* aided by the C.I.A. and by money from American corporations. That knowledge ought to make us a very sympathetic audience for Patricio Guzman's remarkable documentary, *The Battle of Chile*, which details the constitutional crisis in Chile leading up to the *coup*. Yet the film is at first very disconcerting because under Allende Chile's political climate, like the weather itself, was the opposite of what we normally expect. When we see newsreel footage of the police battling in the streets with student demonstrators, or see workers on strike against mine owners, or the national assembly defying the power of the administration, our sympathies instinctively go to the students, the strikers and the assembly. But responding to *The Battle of Chile* in this fashion will make you feel like a rather inappropriate knee-jerk liberal. It's at first hard to get used to the way that all the controls are reversed when a Marxist becomes president of a bourgeois republic.

This political disorientation is unfortunately greatest when we need most to get our political bearings—during the film's opening sections, which deal with Allende's relationship to the national assembly. The film begins as Allende is facing mid-term elections for the assembly where a strong challenge to his ruling Popular Unity Coalition is being mounted from the right by the Christian Democrats. The latter are hoping to gain a 60 percent majority, and apparently do come within a few points of that. This is not enough to impeach Allende, but does seem sufficient to oust several of his ministers and block almost all the legislation he proposes. The film depicts these tactics on the part of the right as being conspiratorial, outrageously obstructionist and of questionable legality. But it is hard for us, who have recently learned to be

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grateful when our own Congress stands up to the President, to grasp Guzman's point of view.

In part the problem here is that the film doesn't do enough exposition of the Chilean system for non-Chileans to follow the political in-fighting. The perfectly legitimate reason for this is that the film wasn't made for non-Chileans. Guzman made it for his own countrymen, even though he knew when he was editing it in exile that few Chileans would have a chance to see it. Nevertheless, this skimpy exposition creates difficulties for the audience the film *does* have in Europe and America. By seeming to neglect or withhold some of the facts, Guzman jeopardizes his analysis of the facts he does reveal. He causes us to mistrust both his cinematic methodology and his political ideology.

In a series of man-in-the-street interviews during the film's opening section, each interview is begun by footage of the interviewer rapping his hand against the microphone. This is a standard practice in making documentaries so that the editor will have a benchmark at which the film footage and the sound track, recorded separately on tape, can be synchronized. Usually that part of the footage is deleted from the finished film, but Guzman leaves it in a half dozen times right at the beginning to differentiate interviews edited together. It is as if he is trying to establish with special emphasis that this is synchronized, wild sound in his film, sound that issues from the events themselves. There are some moments later, however, when questions about the simultaneity of the sound and the footage arise. For instance, at the funeral for Allende's most trusted military advisor, who was assassinated to prevent his arousing Allende's suspicions of a *coup*, we are shown other officers joking and relaxing as the Funeral Dirge is played on the sound track. Guzman's point is that these men were glad to have the dead officer out of the way, but were they openly disrespectful enough to behave like this while the Dirge was played? We don't actually *see* the band playing, and the scene raises an uneasy question about whether Guzman was willing to caricature facts in order to make points.

Though we are only rarely apprehensive about Guzman's having taken liberties of this sort, we still have cause to wonder in general about the relationship between the sound track and the film image. For it is from the narration on the track primarily that we get Guzman's interpretation of events. The events themselves—the ones Guzman is able to get access to, anyway—almost never reveal their inherent significance, and often, as I said before, the significance we would take them to have is the opposite of how the commentary is telling us to interpret them. As Guzman himself explained in a long, very informative interview in 1977 in *Socialist Review*, the difficulty in making the film was that "events occur only as the result of a long process—a process which, in the last analysis, often seems invisible." While he wanted to show his audience "what fascism looks and feels like," he found out instead "how invisible imperialism can be —because in Chile you don't see Phantom jets spewing napalm as in Vietnam; what you see is imperialism reflected in the attitudes of the middle class."

This is unquestionably true. None of us in the United States can now doubt that C.I.A. agents had a direct, important role in overthrowing Allende, as Guzman repeatedly charges; yet we aren't surprised that he was unable to get footage of those agents at work. All the same, though, when we see a worker on strike against Chile's largest copper mine asserting, "We voted for the President to defend the rights of the workers," it is as hard for us as it must have been for him to accept the notion, propounded in the film's commentary, that his strike was only part of a right-wing conspiracy to topple the government by causing a balance-of-payments crisis.

As strong a document of Allende's betrayal as *The Battle of Chile* is, if we finally cannot help feeling there are disparities between it and Chilean history, they no doubt occur because Guzman's politics are further to the left than were Allende's own. During the interview mentioned before, Guzman explained, "The criteria we used to make the film were not a-partisan or 'objective' in the traditional bourgeois sense. . . . Our objectivity was based upon a militant position *within* the struggle." That position seems to be the same one that is occupied in the film by MIR, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, a faction that was too far left even to join Allende's Popular Unity Coalition. There was a contradiction inherent in what Allende attempted to do—an historical contradiction, a Marxist would say—between being the elected head of a democracy and being a Marxist revolutionary. In the end this contradiction forced you to choose between political policies and economic ones. In the union meetings where this choice manifested itself, MIR always seems to have advocated stepping up the expropriations of the factories. But Allende chose to curtail the expropriations instead because he was unwilling to do anything unconstitutional that would give his opposition grounds for charging him with illegality.

In other words Allende's presidency was, above all, a test of democracy, not Marxism. And democracy failed abysmally, not only in Chile but in the United States. Guzman's desire to make Allende a martyr of the Left therefore seems in a way inappropriate, almost exploitative. But perhaps Guzman knows this already. The key to his feelings about what happened in Chile is in the title he gives to his film. His country's tragedy and the loss of political freedoms are

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just one "battle" in an international war of Marxist revolution. Indeed, Guzman may even feel they were a battle it was necessary to lose, for as he tells us in his interview, the Allende government "was just one stage, one phase, one period which has to resolve itself by assuming the offensive in order to move on to its next period, which is of necessity one of confrontation." I don't know whether this is so or not, but it certainly makes clear that Guzman understood his own film.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BOOKS

THE WORLD OF EDMUND WILSON

JANET GROTH

Edmund Wilson: Letters on Literature and Politics, 1912-1972

ELENA WILSON, Ed.

Farrar, Straus, $20 [768 pp]

The first reaction is surprise—here is all the spontaneity, vitality, and humanity of the personal voice that seemed so unaccountably absent from Wilson's journals of the Twenties. One checks the letters of that same period and discovers that it is not the period that makes the difference but the genre. When Wilson is talking to his friends and associates on paper, he can display all these things. When he is talking to himself, he permits himself to speak only in a nearly unaccented, impersonal tone.

How are we to explain this?

Wilson himself may give the best explanation when he tells us that, for him, transforming life into literature is a way to control a chaotic world, to free the "worried intelligence and balked emotions" induced in the sensitive by exposure to that chaos. In his journals of the Twenties, Wilson had not yet learned to turn the entries into literary art as he was later to do so superbly in *Upstate*. His comparative naturalness and ease in the letters is a reflection of the fact that he regarded letter-writing as a branch of literature, and he assumes a comfortable literary persona in them almost from the beginning.

But it is perhaps a mistake to look to these particular letters for the private man except as all letters give that away; they are, after all, commended to our attention for their commentary on literature and politics over a fifty-year period. Like Matthew Arnold, Wilson saw literature the way most people see government—as wielding the kind of power that shapes the culture. That is why when he is writing about literature Wilson is never very far from writing about politics, and vice versa. The special attention Wilson pays in all his writing to the interstices between literature and life make the selection of letters focusing on just the two subjects, literature and politics, very apt in his case. They have been edited, incidentally, with the flair of the devoted amateur by Wilson's widow, Elena. Daniel Aaron has provided an excellent introduction, and there is a graceful foreword by Leon Edel who, in accord with Wilson's request, is editing the comprehensive collection of letters still to come.

There is nothing abstract about the commentary these letters offer on either subject. To F. Scott Fitzgerald, who gratefully acknowledged him as "my literary conscience," Wilson writes a long critique—affectionate but critical—of Fitzgerald's first published novel, *This Side of Paradise*. It is the sort of close scrutiny every first novelist would give his right arm for. There is criticism both particular ("You handicap your story, for one thing, by making your hero go to the war and then completely leaving the war out") and general (Wilson says, "I do think the most telling poetry and romance may be achieved by keeping close to life," but advises Fitzgerald to "Cultivate a universal irony and do read something other than contempory British novelists.") In either case it is remarkably sound, and it seems to have had a beneficent effect on Fitzgerald's work.

There are wonderful letters to his lifelong friend, John Dos Passos, on both subjects. *Adventures of a Young Man* gets the same kind of close, helpful going-over Fitzgerald's novel got. In the 1960s the political interchange between the two heated up considerably as they took each other's measure in the light of the various social revolutions then dominating the world scene. In 1964, writing from Paris, Wilson tells Dos Passos: "I have never regarded myself as a liberal, because the word does not mean anything definite. . . . You've been railing against 'the liberals' all your life, and my impression is that your conception of them is a projection of some suppressed alter ego that you perpetually feel you have to discredit. You used to assail this myth from the radical side, and now you assail it from the conservative."

Back in Wellfleet after his European trip (which included a trip behind the Iron Curtain into Hungary), Wilson again writes Don Passos on political subjects. "You seem to mistake my point of view. I am not 'between for and against Marxism.' The Marxism of the so-called Communist countries is today mostly mere cant to cover their exploitation by the Russians. But the problem in these countries as well as here at home is to

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prevent the apparently inevitable tendency toward centralization and nationalization from crushing individual initiative and any leeway for minority groups."

To Malcolm Cowley, in 1938, Wilson expresses the depth of his feeling about both literature and politics—and his sense of the necessary distinction between them: "What in God's name has happened to you?" he asks Cowley. "I was told some time ago that you were circulating a letter asking for endorsements of the last batch of Moscow trials. . . . I liked your poems in *Poetry* and your remarks about the revolutionary symbolists; and I wish you would purge your head of politics—revolutionary and literary alike—and do the kind of valuable work of which you're capable. I think politics is bad for you because it's not real to you: because what you're really practicing is not politics but literature; and it is only messes up a job like yours to pretend it's something else. . ." Some of this ire had been occasioned by Cowley's praise of Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not* on what Wilson suspected were Marxist grounds rather than those of literary merit alone.

The early letters are amazing for the purposefulness they show Wilson displaying about what he wants from life and how he is going to go about getting it. He seems to have known early on that he was going to turn out to be Edmund Wilson. "My single aim has been literature," he wrote a school friend, Stanley Dell, from war-torn France, when he was only twenty-one. Yet he already understood the duty he must pay to the claims of life—i.e., remaining *engagé* in the social and political affairs of the world. "How should I remain *au-dessus de la mêlée* when better men have assumed burdens as dismal as any involved in modern warfare," he wrote. But he was always first and foremost a literary man, and these letters are the record of a professional, toiling endlessly in the service of what was for him an almost religious calling.

He is forever urging this one of his correspondents to reprint an old piece too good to let perish, that one to contribute a new translation of this or a fresh introduction to that—all the while urging them, as he urged himself, to "Be Strong." He is always coming up with suggestions for increasing the sum of the world's art. Some of this he got paid for in the course of his various posts as editor at *Vanity Fair*, the *New Republic* and elsewhere (though, as one learns from his letters of negotiation with his employers, not, in many cases, by any means well-paid.) Much of it he did simply because he couldn't help himself.

Wilson's devotion to literature and to professional standards manifests itself in these letters frequently in the passion he shows for accuracy, for getting it right. He will enter the most minute cavil into the most affirmative letter of praise (or, more often, whole pages of corrections into a mixed bag of positive and negative reactions). He did it in the interest of professionalism and critical detachment. When one learns from these pages the universality and indifference with which he applied this rule (it was visited upon Gilbert Highet one day, Vladimir Nabokov the next and went on for more than fifty years) it even becomes possible to enter into Wilson's point of view about it. He is genuinely puzzled and surprised that the recipients should take his remarks about their work amiss. Again and again he is obliged to apologize in response to their wounded outcries—saying he'd meant no harm, that what he had said or written shouldn't have been taken personally. In his view, getting it right was all that counted.

> *To Arthur Mizener, April 4, 1950*
>
> *It is important, in writing a biography, to remember that you are telling a story and that the problems of presenting the material are in many ways just the same as those of presenting a subject of fiction.*
>
> *In spite of the fact that the biographer is given his materials in the shape of letters, memoirs, etc., he is just as responsible for the portrait that emerges as Scott was for the Great Gatsby.*
>
> Edmund Wilson:
> Letters on Literature and
> Politics, 1912-1972

There are so many letters one would like to quote if space would permit: Wilson's wicked and hilarious description of *The New Yorker*'s fiftieth anniversary party, for example, or the moving letter he wrote to Zelda on the occasion of Scott's death, or the equally touching, elegaic letter to Dos Passos upon the death of his wife, Katy. There are powerful letters, too, in which Wilson goes to bat for writers he admires who are in trouble: e.g., Mary McCarthy when she was at loggerheads with the *Partisan Review*, and Ezra Pound at the time of his incarceration in St. Elizabeth's. Again one is struck by the disinterested nature of Wilson's interest. Mary McCarthy happened to be his wife in that period. Pound, on the other hand, seems always to have irritated Wilson personally. And, though he admired Pound's poetry, Wilson was so little fond of his critical writing that he once asked John Peale Bishop to stop Pound from contributing any more of his ill-written ill-spelled "incoherent and all but illegible" articles to the *New Republic*.

Wilson's style serves him admirably for the bulk of the letters included. Even in an instance when the tone required is softer and more intimate than any in Wilson's formidable repertoire, his effort gains in poignance what it loses in ease. I am thinking of his rather halting attempt (as he sailed for Russia on the *Berengaria* in 1935) to tell Louise Bogan that "I want you to know how appreciative of you and how fond of you, my dear, I really am: I have never had this kind of companionship with a woman for any length of time ever before in my life." Who but Edmund Wilson would use a colon (correctly, of course) in a sentence designed to

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tell someone of his warm feeling for her?

Wilson's personal, stylistic imprint —reason without frills, plainspoken thoroughness of expression—is present and persistent, whatever the individual letter's content and tone, whether we find him offering (at sixteen) to exchange candid opinions on books with his school chum, Alfred Bellinger, or joking with his friend Dos Passos about their mutual cardiac conditions at the age of seventy-five; whether the person he is addressing is a Wellfleet neighbor or T. S. Eliot. The classical model is Marcus Aurelius, who spells it out as the ideal of being always the same and the same to everyone: in more modern terms it might be said that Wilson represents a "unified sensibility." Perhaps because it is so largely a product of the will—and because that is a word (and a trait) which has largely been dropped from the modern vocabulary, Wilson's manifestation of it in these letters makes a very powerful impression.

The letters all, of course, bear the imprint of Wilson's orderly mind, and nearly all of them possess enough individual interest so that they may be savored a bit at a time. Nevertheless, it is in the aggregate that they achieve their greatest impact, for here is the record of a lifetime spent in the steadfastness of one pursuit, one set of values, a lifetime that achieves, finally, something close to heroism.

Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison

MICHEL FOUCAULT

Translated by Alan Sheridan

Pantheon, $10.95 [333 pp]

W. S. DI PIERO

Michel Foucault is probably the best known and most controversial social historian of our time. More specifically, he is an anatomist and diagnostician of those modern forms of power which were the creation of the Enlightenment. His studies of the origins of the insane asylum (*Madness and Civilization*) and of the modern hospital (*The Birth of the Clinic*) are not simply histories of public institutions; they are provocative analyses of power structures, of that emblematic linkage between sovereign, state, and citizen, which finally determines the character of the society those institutions are meant to serve. Foucault's perceptions are based on the language of the age under study, those contemporary discourses which do not so much report the age as they embody or *dictate* it. Since modern institutions were conceived for the most part in the eighteenth century, Foucault has attended most closely to that period when the sciences of man, those which promised new forms of knowledge, were born. The enormous irony from which Foucault's own discourse derives is that although the human sciences and their instruments seemed to be liberations into knowledge, they were in fact new technologies of power, new and

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more cunning devices for harnessing and manipulating human behavior.

His new book, *Discipline and Punish*, charts the emergence of our modern penal system and the codification of power that underpinned it. Until the Enlightenment punishment was exacted publicly, *written*, on the body of the criminal. The ritualized torture and execution of the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Foucault cites numerous contemporary accounts, and they are all ceremoniously gruesome) were political acts whereby the sovereign took vengeance upon the body of the accused and thereby also impressed his will upon the body politic. In the eighteenth century, however, the soul replaces the body as the object of punishment. The ceremony of the rack and scaffold gives way to closed juridical proceedings, the extended suffering of the criminal is replaced by swift "painless" execution. Moreover, the reformist laws which revolutionized punishment were closely connected to the illegalities which the laws themselves controlled; any alteration in law was also an alteration in the nature of the illegalities, since the two comprised what Foucault calls "one juridical economy"—they were "in continuity."

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Foucault's central argument, which he pursues with great attentiveness and rhetorical ease, is that penal reform, inspired by the need to construct "a new economy and a new technology of power to punish," replaced corporal punishment with discipline and surveillance, a mode more insidiously manipulative than anything that had existed previously, and more sinister in its means of political control. Thus the theater of the scaffold is replaced by the prison modeled on Bentham's Panopticon, the disciplinary hive with its huge all-seeing eye at the center. Spectacle is transformed into surveillance, the watchful gaze of authorities over their charges, applying techniques of observation and examination which were so finely developed by Enlightenment thinkers. The power to punish now had a permanent home, and that monumental household was governed by a discipline which also governed other institutions—schools, hospitals, the military. The prison could legislate behavior and thereby create a new creature, the delinquent, one whom the prison makes a constant offender, the prodigal son of the penal household.

The Enlightenment, in effect, not only discovered the liberties by which we continue to shape our institutions and political structures, but it also invented those invisible instruments of power which the state (or institutions which owe their existence to the state) employs to regulate its citizens. We live more than ever, Foucault reminds us, in a world of surveillance, observation, peeping. Our institutions are so essential to the way we view our own lives that we are controlled to a greater or lesser extent by the disciplines they impose, by their "constant gaze," which are inevitably means of normalization. Conceptually, the identities of prison, school, factory, and hospital may be closely matched: they are not cousins, they are siblings.

In analyzing the origins of these technologies of power, these "moral orthopaedics" which modify our perceptions of our own age, Foucault is writing what he calls "a history of the present." Indeed, his articulation of the conceptual details of the past —its "system of arrangements"—may be used as an explanatory grid laid upon the present. But beyond his investigations into the machinery of modern power, Foucault is also (and perhaps more importantly) an historian of the act of perception, not merely of the thing perceived—an historian of seeing.

For readers like myself who are not comfortably familiar with structuralist vocabulary, Foucault's language is occasionally difficult to penetrate, as it has been in all his books. But it must also be said that his "histories" are filled with sensuous images, bizarre events, dark ironies, and always the drama of a mind interrogating its own origins. Furthermore, Foucault can also write with severe, almost epigrammatic power:

> Discipline is an art of rank.
>
> The Classical age discovered the body as object and target of power.
>
> That moment when the sciences of man became possible is the moment when a new technology of power and a new political anatomy of the body was implemented.
>
> We are much less Greeks than we believe. We are neither in the amphitheatre, nor on the stage, but in the panoptic machine, in-

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

REVIEWERS

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STEVE LAWSON has written for *The New Republic, Horizon, American Film, The Nation* and other journals.

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vested by its effects of power.

The asylum, the hospital, the prison: all modes of containment which have not only altered our systems of power but which have also created our modern concepts of abnormality, and each the subject of a book by Foucault. The most recent and as yet untranslated book by this master historian of confinement has to do with sexuality. It promises to be even more insinuating than *Discipline and Punish*, itself a compelling and demanding work.

True Confessions

JOHN GREGORY DUNNE

Dutton, $9.95 [341 pp]

JOHN DRUSKA

True Confessions begins with a cranky narrator, retired detective Tom Spellacy, whose street-Catholic flair for the colloquial sets us up for the cocky bravado, the jock-jocular worldliness of the rest of the book:

> Anyway, when I got there, Crotty was bending over the second half of Lois Fazenda. The top half. She was naked as a jaybird, both halves. There was no blood. Not a drop. Anywhere. Just this pale green body cut in two. It was too much for Bingo. He took one look at the top half and spilled his breakfast all over her titties, which is a good way to mess up a few clues.

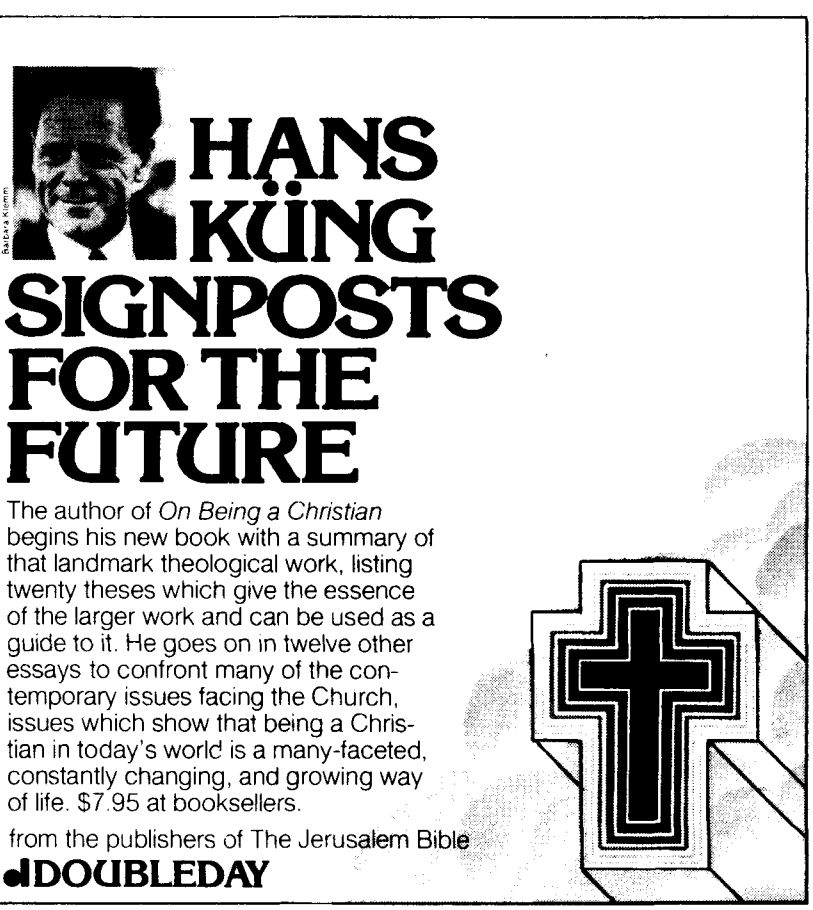
As if we didn't know. The novel ends, after a long flashback midsection ("Then") narrated in the third person, with the creaky contrivance of having our first narrator tie up all the loose ends of the story he's just starred in, which lunch with another ex-dick and news of his own priest-brother's fatal disease in the first "Now" section had started him, and Dunne's second narrator, recalling.

Somewhere in the middle section the narrator's language—some of which sounds gratuitous at first because the context of the story is so shaky, the characterizations, so obvious—starts to work within the realized drama of a story. About halfway through, *True Confessions* becomes an intriguing read. With the history of the Spellacy brothers' typical escape from an Irish ghetto, via seminary for one, prize-fighting and police department for the other, as backdrop, the mystery of the so-called "Virgin Tramp" murder turns into a fascinating case of detection, as well as an inevitable sequence of revelations about the network of shady and often shared connections that Des and Tom's escape has required of them. By the time the mystery ends in anti-climax, a new fix and Tom's revenge on an old boss from his bagman days, Tom has lost some friends, Des his bishopric, and the reader some of that buoyant sense of voyeurism which mystery creates and which Dunne manages to stir in the middle of his book.

Dutton puffs this book not only as " 'a superb police story' " (Fadiman), but also as a multi-dimensional novel about " 'a complex pair of brothers' ". The truth might be simpler than that. Tom and Des Spellacy seem just a mite more complex than *Extension* comic strip heroes; and the novel's heralded Catholic and political implications appear envisioned at times in a manner akin to a finger-paint version of J.F. Powers or a cartoon remake of *Chinatown*, another Los Angeles tale.

I don't think the simplicity of the novel is Dunne's fault so much as it is a function of his part-time narrator and full-time lead. It may be Dunne's fault that he doesn't capitalize on his character and try for a leaner, *simply* superb police story. Instead of a pot-boiler, Dunne might have the hard-boiled kind of book that George V. Higgins has achieved several times (especially *The Friends of Eddie Coyle*).

The virtues of John Gregory Dunne's non-fiction work suggest how he might have accomplished this sort of novel. Strongest among those virtues is a reportorial distance he maintains, but couples with an openness toward his subjects and the shapes of their experience. His scenes of movie moguls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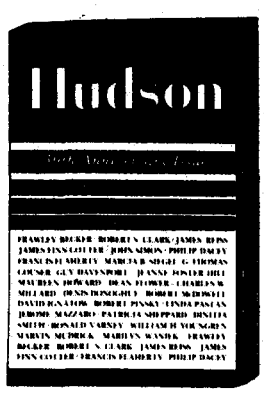
sweating out the previews of *Dr. Dolittle (The Studio)* or of gringo liberals bullshitting in the Delano bar during the Chavez strike *(Delano)* are effective because Dunne convinces us that he is suspending his preconceptions of the people he's depicting; and whatever his present conception, however childish or crass his characters appear, he usually conveys an affectionate interest in them, at least a reluctance to judge overtly, along with a sense of himself as impartial or part partial observer, and of his interest in discovering the truth. From his perspective Dunne is adept at focusing on telling vignettes, that at times connect to create their own significance.

Dunne's non-fiction makes me wonder how *True Confessions* might have sounded had his reportorial technique informed it more fully. Perhaps a version with a greater distancing of the narration from Tom Spellacy but no less engagement with the character and his experience, and a greater dependence on the events of the murder mystery and its aftermath as they happen, from 1946 on, rather than in retrospective frame, to locate the story's shape and ironies. As it is, the telling of *True Confessions* is more contrivance than natural fiction, maybe because Dunne has tried too hard to signify, to frame his characters for us, to explain scenes toward an end, to invent dimensions. *True Confessions* is a middling, big book. Somewhere inside it is a good small book, waiting to get let out like the truth at confession.



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Patterns of Grace: Human Experience as Word of God

TOM F. DRIVER

Harper & Row, $10 [187 pp]

JOHN SHEA

Patterns of Grace is a fascinating, reflective, autobiographical excursion into human experience and religious reflection. Most of the time it is insightful and moving; sometimes it is forced and confusing. But always it is engaging and provocative.

Driver suggests that the arrangement of the book is musical. Five themes interplay and develop in the course of the seven essays. The first is *pattern*, the way we actively shape what we encounter. This leads to the theme of *co-creation*, the way all reality is apprehended in relation and interaction. The third theme is *change*, all things are in flux including divine reality. Fourthly, the essays concern *action*, the movement from chaos to form and the way we initiate and participate in that movement. The final motif is *awareness*, especially as that leads to acceptance of the life processes. All of these touch upon the meaning of "Word of God" which is "the patterns of experience (whatever they may be) which move us to praise and enjoy our co-creator."

Although these themes run through the essays, they do not so control their shape and substance that the impression of a unified statement is

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given. Each essay can stand alone as an experimental etching or a clustering of insights. As such, they can be considered individually.

First, the less successful. In "Dear Tillich: To Be or Not to Be Is Not the Question" Driver juxtaposes a theology of being with a theology of action. He contends that a concentration on being obscures the patterns of action and leads to "abstract man." Although this can be the case and for many people has been, it is not inevitable. To pit being against action is to misplace the problem. The difficulty is how we "segment out" aspects of human existence and parade them as the total story, not allowing other aspects importance or worth. What must be learned is not a new all-absorbing emphasis but a pluralistic and complementary consciousness. What must be considered is how ontological thinking "fits into" an analysis of action, how the "why" and the "what" questions combine for a fuller understanding of human life.

"God, Self, and Authority" recounts the day Driver's students went "bonkers." For thirty minutes his class was bedlam. Students played dead, got hysterical, prayed fervently, snarled, growled, delivered jeremiads, ran around the chapel, and literally climbed the walls. Out of this situation Driver suggests a structure that revolves around the nature of authority, chaos, and initiative. The insights are fascinating, but their relationship to the contours of the experience is tenuous. That something happened that day is beyond doubt. What happened is still in doubt.

The two most powerful essays are those which begin and end the book. Both focus on the exploration and acceptance of bodily existence. The first essay "Tub Water and Sacred Ground" is a highly personal, introspective piece which takes place in bathtub and backyard. It centers on the processes of alienation and reconciliation that go on between the self and body. "Breathe in Me, Breath of God" is a more generalized reflection on the "conspiring" of human and divine breath. This essay is a small masterpiece, seventeen pages that expands consciousness and brings the reader to an appreciation of the sacrality of human life. The point of both pieces is "whenever our awareness is heightened by unjudging acceptance of whatever is going on, we enter upon holy ground and are moved to praise."

The remaining essays concern Driver's journey toward "Letting Go"; how stories function in human consciousness in "Telling Time: The Importance of Stories and Theology's Tall Tale," and a critique of all that denigrates experience and a celebration of all that enhances it in "Human Experience is Word of God."

In *Patterns of Grace* we learn a lot about Tom Driver. He freely reveals the inhibitions of his childhood, his high control needs, his relations with his wife, friends, students, and faculty, his difficulty with conflict situations, the failure of his academic reforms at Union, and his self-doubt. But very seldom does this self-disclosure become self-preoccupation. His story, while inevitably centered on himself, reaches beyond those original confines to stimulate the self-understanding of whoever reads it. This is high praise for any autobiographical work.

Patterns of Grace is, quite simply, a beautifully written book. To skim it for major points or struggle to locate Driver on the theological spectrum is to miss its impact. This book must be "meditated through." The essays are written to address the life of the reader and not merely inform him. In a time when so much theology reads as if it were a computer print-out, Driver's elegant and engaging prose is a delightful alternative.

Part of Driver's style throughout the book is to thank people (Tillich, Betty Fuller, his wife, students, etc.) for the new life he has experienced through them. This is a generous and appreciative style and can easily be returned. People interested in the religious appropriation of human experience can say thanks to Tom Driver for *Patterns of Grace.*

IN BRIEF

RABBI: THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, *by Murray Polner, Holt, Rinehart & Winston* $8.95 [254 pp]

There is a story that is told about a chameleon. They put him on a red background and he turned red; on a green background and he turned green; on a blue background and he turned blue; they put him on a scotch plaid and he went crazy.

I tell that story because one of the things that emerges from this book is the number of conflicting and contradictory expectations of the Rabbi that are found within the American Jewish community. As Murray Polner traveled around this country interviewing rabbis and interviewing congregants about their rabbis he found a host of different definitions of what a rabbi's primary task is. Some want him to be a pastor, others a preacher, some want him to be a politician, others, a teacher, some want him to be a scholar, others an administrator, some want him to be in the forefront of social action, others want him to be a conservator of the status quo and not make waves. And the rabbi must somehow tread his way among all these different and sometimes contradictory understandings of his task, and be true to his own understanding of his purpose and to that which he inherits from his tradition at the same time.

The rabbinate are an extraordinary group of talented and pressured, harassed and restless, successful and yet frustrated men if this portrait is correct. Polner tells of men who were repudiated by their congregations because they were too far ahead of their troops on civil rights issues in the South in the sixties but he also tells of men who led the battle with courage and determination and were supported.

He interviews one suburban rabbi who is involved in social action projects at home, where it is risky, as well as in the South, and he tells of one small town rabbi who finds himself in a community of Jews prob-

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ably too small to be viable for much longer who sees his task as teaching and transmitting the tradition while his congregants look upon him as their spokesman to others, and not to themselves.

There are many figures that I wish Polner had included and many issues that I wish he would have dealt with. There is much here on the Rabbi as social activist but hardly anything on the Rabbi's own religious life or the place of spiritual search within the synagogue. There is much here on the Reform Rabbi but not enough on the new breed of Orthodox Rabbis. There is material here on small-town Jewry but hardly anything on the havurah movement or on campus Jewish life and its rabbinate or on the tension between the religious and the secular forces within the synagogue or between the synagogue and the organized Jewish community. There is not nearly enough here on the rabbinate and its psychic cost on the Rabbi and on his family or on the many who have chosen the rabbinate for two and three generations in a row.

Polner makes a good case for his belief that the Rabbi is a central figure in American Jewish life but he leaves us wanting to know much more about his inner life, his place in the power structure, and his response to the new spiritual questions of the seventies. Perhaps he will complete the task he has begun by giving us a sequel sometime soon.

JACK RIEMER

BIG BAD WOLVES: MASCULINITY IN THE AMERICAN FILM *by Joan Mellen, Pantheon*, $12.95. [365 pp]

Joan Mellen's book opens optimistically: "This book is about the fabrication in American films of a male superior to women, defiant, assertive, and utterly fearless." A laudatory intention—to debunk a myth—but what else is new? Is anyone seriously interested in films *not* aware of the staying power of a he-man image on our screens?

This might have been a valuable study if the author had focused on a few worthwhile films, but since her bias is sociological rather than aesthetic every American movie from *The Great Train Robbery* to *Dog Day Afternoon* comes in for some debunking. (The two best American films, *Citizen Kane* and *Dr. Strangelove*, get just thirty lines between them.) Icons like Astaire, Chaplin and Keaton are passed over hurriedly because they are, it seems, unrealistic: the "harsh world" is receptive only to the misogynist super-male. (What Mellen doesn't realize, of course, is that Casablanca, Monument Valley, and Sherwood Forest were about as "real" as Oz.) Tracy, Bogart and Gable are extolled for their emotionalism and charm, while "somber, vacuous" types like Bronson and Eastwood are deplored; the whole question of basic talent never comes up.

Mellen does make some concise observations: how male stars of the Twenties invariably appeared in epics set in the past; Bogart's persona, pitched midway "between the cop and the hoodlum"; the anti-intellectualism of film heroes. She's especially deft at Thirties films—the emasculation of Gary Cooper's image thanks to his Capra roles; the cheerful eroticism of *It Happened One Night*. But there are too many paeans to nonsense like *Dog Day Afternoon*, with its "honest" homosexuality. There's something queer behind every screen male friendship, if Mellen is to be believed.

Two other caveats: she's much stronger when it comes to evoking content than at discussing technique, but then technique isn't directly applicable to her basic argument. And more than once her rhetoric sails out of sight: "The healing tears of a vulnerable male hero" . . . "his caustic macho self" . . . "*Deliverance* begins to crackle with terror." Also, I find incredible one of her climactic pronouncements: "Women have been eliminated from American films" (except for Minelli, Streisand, and Fonda). This in the year of *Annie Hall, The Goodbye Girl, Julia, The Turning Point, The Late Show, An Unmarried Woman, Three Women* . . . the titles alone give Joan Mellen the lie. Which is what happens when a complex art falls into the hands of a determined theorist.

STEVE LAWSON

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(*Continued from page 291*)

peace and mutual security (though those who protest the neutron bomb, while ignoring the Backfire bomber and the SS-20 missiles, weapons which would cause far greater destruction of life in a European war than the neutron bomb, but also are capable of striking the United States in some circumstances, do "objectively" serve Soviet goals), but why is it that those who argue on the opposite side are nearly always dismissed as "cold warriors," "hawks," or agents of the "Military-Industrial Complex"? We "hawks" are just as concerned with averting nuclear war and promoting human survival as

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the Mobilization for Survival, but we try to look at the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be. This seems to me the only sound basis for proceeding.

BENJAMIN FIEDLER

Dick Cavett

Evanston, Ill.

To the Editors: I am a long-time subscriber and I like your magazine very much. I am in general agreement with your political views and also like your articles.

I was, however, very much angered by a column in your issue of Jan. 20, a criticism by Philip Terzian in the TV section concerning the Dick Cavett show. I consider this show excellent and Dick Cavett a very good and tactful interviewer. Mr. Terzian finds him pretentious and says he bullies his guests. I have never heard him do this. I did not see his interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Ramsey, but can well imagine there would be a conflict of opinions between him and the other participants, Jane and Peter Fonda. I do not think this objectionable, however.

I do not believe Dick Cavett is particularly interested in violent controversy like that on the Mailer-Vidal evening, but it did give me quite an interesting slant on these writers' personalities. Catering to the bad taste of the general public certainly is not characteristic for Dick Cavett nor is interviewing show-people and boring us with unimportant details of their life.

What I enjoy in these rather unusual interviews is the occasion of meeting outstanding people and the generally intelligent questions that help one get a definite impression of these personalities, their views on life and methods of work in their respective professions, be they scientific or artistic. To mention only a few examples: Henry Steele Commager, Bella Abzug and Julian Bond, of whom I got a totally new and different impression. The very sensitive interview with the blind ballerina Alicia Alonso, James Levine, the fine musician, Eleanor Clark discussing her book *Eyes*, and the touching interview with Antonia Brico, the enthusiastic conductor who so rarely gets occasion to conduct. The interesting discourse on language between Edwin Newman and Professor Galbraith, Mdm. DeMille and the dramatist Simon, the interview with and performance by the wonderful organist Virgil Fox . . . and so I could go on and on.

These personalities were all intelligently and tactfully interviewed by Dick Cavett. They are people who would generally not consent to be on a talkshow but they come when Cavett invites them because they respect him. They would certainly not come if he did nothing but bully them and try to put himself in the foreground and in a most favorable light.

There is little on TV as interesting as the Dick Cavett show. Therefore I finds Mr. Terzian's judgment incorrect and unjust. It seems to stem from a frequently found prejudice of Americans against the so-called "eggheads," that is, intellectuals. I find intelligence and education no handicap, but an asset.

It is, by the way, not Cavett who mentions his Yale education but the people he interviews. And why shouldn't they?

MARIANNE WILLISCH

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Abigail McCarthy (con't)

have ever earned—you can see their sense of self-worth returning," says Marie Parr, Center director. "They blossom. It shows in their dress, their grooming, even their posture." Her remark is reminiscent of a favorite quotation of the Displaced Homemakers from novelist Doris Lessing—"any human being anywhere will blossom into a hundred unexpected talents . . . simply by being given the opportunity to use them."

At the present moment a Displaced Homemaker Assistance Act is before committees in the House and the Senate of the United States Congress. It would authorize and direct the Secretary of Labor to establish a minimum of 50 pilot project centers for Displaced Homemakers, as a special time-limited program. They are planned to be rural as well as urban. The House bill, introduced by Representative Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, is awaiting clearance before the Committee on Education and Labor in its subcommittee on employment opportunity. The Senate Bill, introduced by Senator Birch Bayh, is before the Senate Committee on Human Resources in its subcommittee on employment and poverty.

Letters to these committees to jar the bill out of committee and to a vote would be a modern equivalent of sharing our substance with poor widows, so that there could be many more who could say like the homemaker who testified before the Senate committee, "From the first day of counseling I knew there was hope for me. . ."

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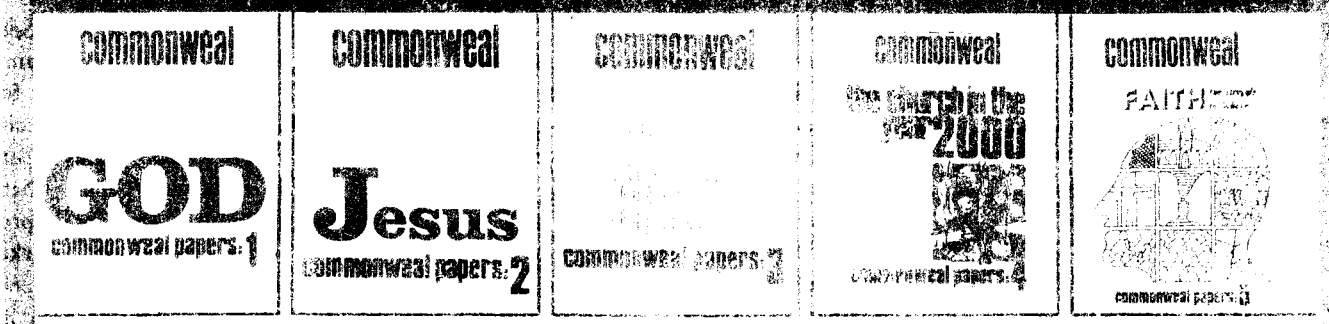

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